THE ENGLISH REVIEW

NEW SERIES NOVEMBER, 1931 No. 6.

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THE
ENGLISH REVIEW
25th Year of Publication

NEW SERIES — NO. 6

Edited by DOUGLAS JERROLD

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Correspondence

A National Fuel Policy

To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

SIR,—There was a passage in Capt. Bernard Acworth's pungent article upon a National Fuel Policy, in the October number of *The English Review*, that I hope will not be overlooked by readers whose fortune, like my own, is to live on the outskirts of London.

The passage that I have in mind concerns not our National Fuel Policy, but the efforts being made to make electric light and power more accessible. At present, we are in a quandary—from which there seems to be no means of escape. In the centre of London the cost per power-unit of electricity is 1d. Within 14 miles of London, the cost, at least in my district, is 6d. per lighting-unit and, in the like ratio, correspondingly more per power-unit. In other words, we are economically discouraged in every way from using electricity, and the victimized residents are forced to rely, at any rate for cooking, on gas which (to put it mildly) has nothing to recommend it whatever. Feeling myself a victim to unnecessary electric charges, I asked an old member of my local council what the explanation could be. He told me that he, and the residents whom he represented, had complained so bitterly of this victimization that he had applied for advice and help to the Electricity Commission, whose chairman is Sir John Snell. After some official delay, he was told that the Electricity Commission could do nothing until their pylons (so much uglier than those now the rule in France) should have been erected everywhere; that the Electricity Commission had no power to influence the conduct or the prices of the local "public supply companies"; that, in sum, all we could do would be to follow the pious advice (so comforting to all martyrs) of the late Lord Oxford and Asquith; in other words, "to wait and see."

Whether the Central Electricity Board, whose functions, according to Whitaker's Almanac, are "the reorganization and control of the generation of electricity . . ." can do any better than the Electricity Commission is, perhaps, uncertain. None the less, as Sir John Snell apparently is impotent to help us, possibly the chairman of the Central Electricity Board, Sir Andrew Duncan, may be more fortunately placed. He will not, let us hope, grudge your readers his opinion.

Yours truly,

OSBERT BURDETT.

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

NOVEMBER, 1931

Current Comments

The Verdict.

THE victory of the National Government is to be interpreted first and foremost as a damning vote of " no confidence " in the character of the majority of the members of the late Labour Administration. As such it is a genuinely national verdict, exceeding in emphasis even the vote which in 1923 eclipsed, and, as it now appears, ended the career of Mr. Lloyd George. Unfortunately, the parallel cuts deeper. It was natural and decent that the electorate should repudiate, in unmistakable terms, the men who voted secretly for tariffs and appealed to the country as free traders; the men who supported the policy of reverting to and maintaining the gold standard during two periods of office and then ascribed the whole burden of unemployment to that policy; the men who proposed in secret a cut of 12½ per cent. on teachers' salaries and then denounced a 10 per cent. cut as a breach of a sacred contract; the men who were prepared to call for almost as heavy sacrifices as their successors to meet a grave crisis, and then denounced the crisis as a ramp. For these things there was no shadow of excuse; the record of these men was deeply discreditable and the country has passed on them a merciless but just judgment. But the country has not endorsed the policy of the National Government because that policy has not been declared.

The Moral for the Government.

NONE the less it would be a fatal error to interpret this election in purely negative terms. It is a sensational vindication of the character of the people—a no less sensational condemnation of the past cowardice of the great majority of our politicians. Right up to the day

of the poll, the majority of the politicians of all parties were frightened of the issue. They could not believe that the electorate, though it had been visibly antagonized by the policy of compromise and half-hearted alternations of bribery and economy, and had shown its disgust in wholesale abstentions from the by-election polls, would really welcome the courageous gesture of the Prime Minister and Mr. Snowden in turning their backs on a bankrupt policy. Yet what has happened has only proved once more the oldest of all political truisms, that you only divide a nation by appeals to cupidity, that you invariably unite it by an appeal to self-sacrifice. If this lesson can at last be learnt by the nation's leaders, the parliamentary system will stand. If it is forgotten, it will fall. The next two years will be decisive in the history of parliamentary government, not only here, but on the Continent and in the Dominions.

The Key to Confidence.

THERE is much harm in the empty rhetoric about not exploiting a national victory for party ends. What it involves is the assumption that the policies of Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Baldwin, and the Liberal leader are anti-national and dictated by party or personal interests. This is a grave and foolish libel. The only possible policy which can serve a party is a policy which serves the nation. Any policy which does not serve the nation should never have been formulated. Any policy which does serve the nation must be carried through with the utmost thoroughness of purpose. If under the pretence of preserving national unity the new Government indulges in a parade of committees and commissions to avoid reaching a decision unpopular with this section or that, the imposing majority will vanish before a storm of popular indignation. The people have asked as never before for firm and vigorous leadership. If they are disappointed, they will not ask again. Above all, what the people expect is a single-minded adherence to principles

honourably sustained by a serious conviction. When that conviction is lacking there can be no leadership and no confidence.

Some Gaps in the Picture.

DO the members of the new Government realize that the post-war political programme has failed abjectly and finally? Do they realize that the attempt to cloak the growth of a world anarchy beneath an endless series of futile conferences has failed? Do they realize that the policy of unilateral free trade has failed? Finally, do they realize that it is they who are jointly responsible, with the present opposition, for these failures, that if they persist in attempting to carry on their old policies, the judgment of the country on their capacity to govern will be unhesitating and final? It is not the capitalist system but the semi-socialized state which is in ruins; it is not the old-world order based on Nationalism, but the new world-order based on half-hearted internationalism which is in chaos. It may be true enough to say that a completely socialized state would be worse, but the political public will always prefer the unknown possibility to the known evil. And it will not unreasonably do so, if it finds that the evil is getting worse.

The Fault is not in our Stars.

THE National Government has a great opportunity. It faces a world temporarily freed from the burden of war debts and reparations, and a country temporarily freed from the burden of an artificially valued £. Whatever ill-effects the devaluation of the £ may have had, and may still have, they cannot now be undone. Whatever unsettling effects the constant propaganda against the reparations settlements may have had in Europe, and however much this propaganda itself may have contributed to the German and thus indirectly to our own crisis, this chapter of history is now closed. The

National Government therefore comes into office with its hands free so far as two of the causes of the world unrest and of our own industrial depression are concerned. It possesses a third advantage, which can be over-estimated, but which may yet be so considerable as to be decisive. It has a free hand as regards its own fiscal policy. These great advantages will, however, be thrown away unless it is clearly realized that neither the return to the gold standard nor the reparations settlements (considered financially), nor our own fiscal policy, have been, jointly or severally, the chief causes of the present world crisis.

The Real Crisis Abroad.

TAKE first the question of reparations. To anyone who thinks that reparations in themselves can be responsible for the world crisis, it is only necessary to say that for years before the war this country had a credit balance of over £200 millions per annum. If the necessity for making to one country over a long period of years such a vast annual payment was in itself fatal to prosperity, most of the world would have been bankrupt years before the war, and the cellars of the Bank of England, like those of the Federal Reserve Bank and the Banque de France to-day, would have been bulging with useless gold. The difference lies in the world conditions then and now. Central Europe is threatened with bankruptcy because her political conditions and her economic policy render investment by her creditors in her different units hazardous to the point of folly. Before the world can recover, or go near to recovery, the conditions must be re-created under which alone debit trade balances can be liquidated otherwise than by gold withdrawals—which merely restrict credit, lower prices and intensify the crisis.

The Real Crisis at Home.

THE real crisis at home is the breakdown of the machinery which the capitalist system should provide for the liquidation of losses and the adjustment of supply to demand. This breakdown is the direct result

of political action, and has led directly to our adverse trade balance. One of the main causes has been the artificial over-valuation of the £, for which Mr. Snowden, Mr. Churchill, and the Bank of England and Treasury experts must share the responsibility. An even more important cause has been systematic attempts to provide a guaranteed standard of life by means of the redistribution of the national income in the form of services, pensions and other non-effective payments. All these payments have been effected out of the proceeds of industry, through the distribution of purchasing power to non-producers of exchangeable goods. This has raised the price of exchangeable goods grotesquely, as we see by comparing retail prices with wholesale, and English with foreign export prices. In other words, we have negatived the advantages of the new devices of science, and of the new practice of mass production. We have forced up the "overheads" of industry to a figure so high that even with mass production on its most efficient scale the price of the finished article was too high to create the necessary demand.

The Path to Higher Wages.

DOES this mean that lower wages are the only cure? Quite on the contrary, the policy of the National Government should be openly and continuously directed towards higher wages. Higher wages become possible directly we are allowed to invest our money in the most productive industries, instead of paying all our savings to the State for purposes not productive to the maximum, and directly the wage-earner is allowed to spend his earnings as he likes, and not, at the dictation of the State, on services for which, in nine cases out of ten, he doesn't realize that he is paying.

The Meaning of Our Trade Deficit.

THE alternative to such a reversal of our econonic policy is a growing trade deficit, which could not,

in such case, be remedied by foreign investments in this country, because the confidence in British industry, reborn to-day, would have vanished on the morrow. The reason why high taxation leads to a trade deficit is of course simple. It raises the price of our goods and contracts the demand for them at the same time. Even in the home market this is true. Although much of the money collected filters back to our own nationals, the whole expense of collection and redistribution, the loss of spending power owing to the time-lag between the two, and the sheer economic waste of a large portion of the expenditure in providing or subsidizing non-productive services, depress the home market and diminish our domestic purchasing power continuously and progressively. At the same time these policies put, as we have said, a definite and fatal embargo on the flow of labour and capital to those new enterprises to which, in every decade, we have to look for our progress.

The ABC of the Problem.

THE creation of new and favourable conditions for industry at home and abroad is thus the simple and urgent task of the new Government. To negotiate about the flow of gold without dealing with the conditions which caused the gold to flow; to negotiate the cancellation of war debts and reparations without dealing with the conditions which rendered these international transfers to France and America (infinitely less in volume than those due to Great Britain year in year out before the war) fatal to economic equilibrium; these things would be the merest folly. Equally foolish would it be to re-organize our own fiscal policy without regard to the main cause of our debit trade balance. This cause was not the competition of free imports but the increasing toll levied on productive industry by the State in a decade of falling prices. **The £ must not again be stabilized except at a figure which makes the permanent sterling obligations of the State a burden which industry can**

bear without losing its power to compete in the world's markets.

The Gist of the Matter.

THE present State and Local taxation takes from the proceeds of industry nearly £3 per family per week. No system of government can do this *at the present level of prices* and leave its citizens with a decent standard of life. We are half way to the slave State already, and we are not nearly near enough to it for solvency if our present policies are continued.

The Essentials of Reconstruction.

IT follows from what has been said so far that the essential preliminaries to national reconstruction are two. First, we have to work for the restoration of political stability in Europe and just and ordered government in the East. Until these ends have been attained, the ordinary machinery of international trade for the liquidation of adverse trade balances cannot function, and the economic progress of the world is at a standstill. Secondly, we have to raise the internal price-level of this country, in order to reduce the burden of our internal obligations. This means a **wise and far-reaching measure of currency reform.** This reform will inevitably raise permanently the cost of imports in terms of sterling, **and will be impracticable without the help of a tariff** planned to render us in time independent of selected groups of imports, by guaranteeing to our own producers a home market sufficiently stable to enable large-scale production to be put in hand. The determination of the industries to be selected is a matter for experts. It is sufficient to say that agriculture must certainly be one of our protected industries.

Some Dangers Ahead.

IT is necessary to issue a word of warning on this tariff issue. For the first time in our history the government

of to-day has a free hand to protect industry and agriculture. Let us be quite sure that the chance is not wasted, and finally wasted, by the neglect to re-establish those conditions which are equally essential to a free trade or a protected country. Whatever our fiscal system, we cannot afford our present level of taxation at the present price-level. We can perhaps raise that price-level by protection, but in so far as the rise becomes general our export trade will suffer from increased manufacturing costs, and in so far as it does not become general, the dead-weight of disproportionate taxation will remain. It is only by accepting a substantially lower valuation of the £ that our price-level can be raised without hurting our export trade, while at the same time the due proportion between taxation and turnover can be restored.

The Real Case for Tariffs.

THE case for protection is, indeed, political, in the strict sense of that term, and not economic. The case for protection is the change of world conditions which makes it necessary for us to change the direction of our industrial activities, and the changes in domestic conditions which make it impossible for us to do this without being able to guarantee, by providing a temporarily closed market, a return on the capital to be invested in the reorganized industries. The changes in world conditions are three. A reduced demand due to anarchy and unrest: the industrialization of large territories which during the years of our prosperity were predominantly agricultural; and the advance of science which has robbed us of the preferential advantages we once derived from our climate and our coal. The changes in domestic conditions are the high rate of taxation; the immobilization of labour owing to social legislation; the nervousness of the investing public owing to political instability as much at home as abroad. These arguments for a tariff have yet to be answered.

Old Arguments and New Answers.

SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE and his colleagues, in their book *Tariffs: the case examined*, base their argument for free trade mainly on the old fallacy that imports pay for exports and that to restrict the one is to restrict the other. If this were true, it would follow that a nation could never increase its favourable trade balance, or reduce it. Which sounds, and is, absurd. The fact is that imports are not, in any real sense, paid for by exports and continue long after the total of visible and invisible exports is inadequate. The balance is met by loans from abroad, by exports of gold, and by the transfer of capital from the debtor country. This process can in practice continue over two or three generations until only the actual and admitted bankruptcy of the country checks the flow of unregulated imports. This is the simple and sufficient answer to this old, but still misunderstood, objection to fiscal reform.

The Question of Administration.

THERE is a fourth task for the National Government which can be ranked side by side with fiscal reform as a necessary subsidiary to its main duties of inaugurating a new, vigorous and just foreign and imperial policy, and of reducing the burden of taxation by a wise measure of currency and fiscal reform. **This fourth task is the reform of administration.** The slap-dash methods of the past ten years must go. If public money is to be spent it must be spent where it will reduce, instead of creating, inequalities. It is unchallengeably true—and the proofs exist in the Ministry of Health to-day—that a proper reform of the machinery of public assistance and unemployment relief would actually enable the rates of relief to be increased while showing greater savings than those provided by the recent cuts. The same is true of education and teachers' salaries. The same would be true of the police if the traffic on our roads were made to pay its fair share of the cost of traffic control. That these

cuts were necessary as an emergency measure we do not deny, but their necessity remains a damning indictment of the slovenliness of successive administrations.

Foreign Affairs.

THE past month has not witnessed any marked lifting of the clouds on the international horizon, and, if anything, the general situation is a little worse than it was four weeks ago. To some extent, of course, uncertainty as to the probable outcome of events in this country has contributed to such a state of affairs, for a weak or disturbed England always has the worst possible influence upon the Continent. The sweeping victory for the National Government means, however, the installation of an administration that can at any rate look five years ahead, and that is a long period in post-war Europe. In this way it will represent the triumph of stability, which, in its turn, may beget a little of that confidence of which the world stands in so great a need if there is to be a real revival.

At the same time, it is not easy to see how stability is ever to be attained for any considerable period so long as democracy, at any rate in theory, remains the order of the day. The policy of the Great Powers, with one or two exceptions, is dependent upon the result of recurring elections, and this renders it impossible to look more than a few months ahead. Next year, for instance, a new President has to be elected in Germany, and a new Chamber in France, so that, until these events have taken place, both Berlin and Paris will be more or less marking time; hardly will these elections be over before the United States will be called upon to choose a successor to Mr. Hoover, and by the time that the new American President is settled at the White House another German general election will be at hand, and a British one will be looming in the distance.

Continuity of policy is becoming as unusual among the governments of the modern world as it was among the

city-states of Greece, and the resulting instability and confusion are likely to be as great. The world wants a political as much as an economic moratorium.

The Far Eastern Embroglio.

IT is not easy to discover the truth concerning recent events in Manchuria, and the apparently deliberate Chinese falsification of news is not rendering it any easier. Telegrams from Reuter's correspondent in Tokyo have been altered in transit by Chinese officials, and the amended versions published in China, whence they have found their way into the British Press. As the Chinese are republicans, in theory, and are also quite incapable of preserving law and order in their own country, they naturally have much to recommend them to our own Liberals and Socialists, especially when they come into conflict with a monarchical Power, like Japan. In these circumstances the readers of the British Press would be well advised to suspend judgment upon Far Eastern affairs until more reliable information is available.

Meanwhile, the League of Nations has made a sorry mess of its intervention, and for the reason that it will persist in treating China as an effective force in international politics. To talk of the Chinese Government guaranteeing anything, let alone the security of foreigners, is the veriest nonsense, and yet the presumably valuable time of the world's statesmen has been wasted at Geneva in trying to settle the Manchurian problem upon this assumption. Direct negotiation between Tokyo and the local brigand who happens to control Manchuria for the moment is the only possible outcome, and if the League had realized that from the first it would have been able to save its face. This refusal to face facts will yet ruin the League, which is in far more danger from its friends than from its enemies.

D. J.
C. P.

British Railways: Present and Future

By Sir Charles Stuart Williams

THE railways of Great Britain have in the past rendered such good service to the country that no one can view their present plight with equanimity, and their inevitable part in the transport of the nation remains, and in my opinion always will remain, of such importance as to justify a review of their position.

Taking the post-war period of 1923–30 inclusive, the following are the figures for the four main-line groups, viz. the L.M.S., L.N.E., G.W. and Southern systems, which together represent a total capital expenditure of £1,234·03 millions:—

RECEIPTS.

(All figures are in £1 millions.)

	1923	1930
Passengers	68·9	57·0
Parcels, etc.	17·4	17·5
Merchandise	51·2	45·5
Coal	38·9	34·6
Minerals	15·3	14·6
Live Stock	2·0	1·8
Sundry	1·9	1·6
Total	195·6	172·6

EXPENDITURE.

	1923	1930
Maintenance of way and works, rolling stock	51·1	44·6
Loco. running	38·3	33·5
Traffic	52·1	48·3
General rates, insurance, etc.	15·4	12·5
Total	156·9	138·9
Railway net receipts	45·6	37·7
Interest and dividends paid	46·7	39·6

In brief, against a drop in gross receipts of £23 millions, it was found possible to reduce the corresponding expenditure by no less than £18 millions. On the percentage basis, a decrease in earnings from 100 (taking 1923 as the basic year) to 88 was accompanied by a decrease in expenditure from 100 to 89, or within 1 per cent. of the reduced earnings.

Now this undoubtedly seems a creditable achievement, even if it indicates considerable extravagance during the earlier part of the period. But the effect on holders of ordinary stock (including pref. and def. ordinary shares where they exist, and amounting altogether to £275·47 millions) is as follows:—

	1923	1930
L.M.S.	7 per cent.	2 per cent.
L.N.E. Pref... ..	5 „	0·25 „
„ Ord.	2·5 „	nil.
G.W.	8 „	5·5 „
S. Railway Pref. ..	5 „	5 „
„ Def. ..	3·5 „	1·25 „

and it is, of course, these figures which reflect the value of the equity of the companies.

So far, so bad, but alas! the subsequent events cast an even darker shadow over the scene. Receipts from January 1 to September 6, 1931, show the following decreases in gross earnings as compared with the corresponding weeks of 1930—itself, of course, a deplorably bad year:—

	Decrease.
L.M.S.	£4·08 millions.
L.N.E.	3·75 „
G.W.	2·09 „
S.	·82 „
Total	£10·74 „

or, assuming a similar decline for the remainder of the year, a total drop for the twelve months of approximately £15½ millions.

If economies (including the recent wage reductions) are assumed as aggregating for the year 1931 about £5½ millions, there will be a drop of some £10 millions in net receipts, and the whole of the balance for ordinary dividend payment has gone. Actually, of course, the position will be that the G.W.R. may be able to pay some small dividend on its ordinary stock, but none of the other lines can hope to pay more than a nominal dividend, if that, and the position of the lower preference stocks is seriously threatened in the case of two groups.

Now let us turn from this depressing picture to the traffic figures. Two facts stand out clearly from an analysis of the results. In passenger traffic the following figures are significant :—

PASSENGER RECEIPTS.

(All figures in £ millions.)

	1923	1930
Full fares	£39·4	£19·8
Excursion and week-end	9·8	19·8
Workmen	3·4	3·2
Tourist	3·1	3·0
Other	4·4	4·5
Season tickets	10·2	8·3
Total	£70·3	£58·6

That is to say, while the receipts from excursion and week-end tickets have increased by £10 millions (the percentage rising from 14 per cent. to 33·9 per cent.), those from full fares have dropped by no less than £19·6 millions (the percentage falling from 56 per cent. to 33·7 per cent.).

On the goods side there is a somewhat similar result. The tonnage of goods handled fell from 27·3 million tons in 1923 to 25 million tons in 1930, but the number of consignments rose from 94·9 millions to 104·2 millions, that is to say, the average size of a consignment has notably decreased. The " staple " industries have ceased for one reason or another to make use of the railways to

an important extent. The average load per wagon has dropped, but the average length of haul has increased.

This being the position, two inter-connected questions arise: how far, if at all, could these results have been avoided—and how far, if at all, can they be remedied?

How far could they have been avoided? The very economies effected during the period under review—economies so large that up to the end of 1929 they actually exceeded the decrease in receipts—appear to show that expenditure during the earlier part of the period was unnecessarily high. All those who have had any experience of retrenchment schemes know that it is usually found impossible to effect savings which go more than, say, half-way towards meeting a falling revenue—and it follows that there must have been extravagant expenditure—which, if it had been avoided, would have realized very considerable sums for reserve and replacements. Further, while this extravagance was in being, there was a lamentable failure to recognize the altered conditions, arising on the one hand from the lack of competition between the different systems, with its inevitable reaction on the keenness and initiative of the staff; and on the other, from the growing menace of road competition, a keen, young and vigorous industry, free from restrictions and traditions, and showing in each succeeding month its energy and enterprise.

Take the passenger traffic first. There will be small difference of opinion as to the main causes of the " drift " from rail to road. It may be divided into two main classes :—

(*a*) the loss to privately owned motor-cars, and
(*b*) the loss to motor coaches and buses.

The former class covers both the pleasure traveller and the old commercial traveller. Both these classes found that the purchase of a motor-car rendered them more or less independent of the railway, able to choose their own timings, to carry their own luggage, and to

avoid expenditure on cabs, porters, and excess luggage. For all distances of moderate dimensions these advantages were enormous, and I see no prospect of their decreasing. In particular, the "commercial" could reduce his hotel and porterage charges enormously, and his new means of transport also obviated the necessity for much packing and unpacking. These losses are, I think, permanent, save in so far as a general lowering of the national income has led, and may lead, to many people ceasing to keep a car—a possibility which in big cities may be of considerable importance, since the necessity for a car is less, while the cost of its upkeep is greater. As to the "commercial," I see no remedy save for the railways to hire out suitable vehicles at strategic points, to which the commercial would be conveyed on favourable terms.

Turning now to the passenger who uses public vehicles, the position is different. Here the loss is due to (*a*) the easy availability of the road vehicle passing along streets and roads in greater proximity to the houses of the people, (*b*) lower costs, (*c*) simple and easily understood schedules of fares, free from all doubts and restrictions, (*d*) definite, and in some respects, superior standards of comfort.

To meet these advantages the railway is not without its own weapons. It can offer a higher average speed over all except perhaps the shortest distances; it offers greater safety* and punctuality; it offers greater facilities for reading, playing games and obtaining comfortable meals, and its terminal facilities are good, providing shelter from the weather and opportunities for rest and refreshment.

In my view, the failure of the railways to retain a greater part of this traffic is due to the failure to recognize the danger and to insufficient effort to meet it when recognized.

It would serve no useful purpose to labour this point in reference to the past, but something may be said as to

* Safety is a matter of great and growing importance. About 20 persons lose their lives on our roads and streets every day in the year.

the present and the future. The standard rate of charge for third-class travel is still 1½d. per mile, but it is clear that there has been a great decline in the traffic carried at this rate. The passengers so carried have fallen in the period 1923–30 from 415 to 139 millions, i.e. by 276 millions, or 66 *per cent.* In 1923 this traffic amounted to 31·5 per cent. of the whole; in 1930 to 11·9 per cent. That is to say, only rather more than 1 in 10 passengers pay the full third- or first-class fare. Yet the railways snatch at the vanishing garment, so full of holes, as though it would protect their nakedness! They stick to it, while, on the other hand, offering expensive and extravagant accommodation in sleeping- and dining-cars, extraordinarily low excursion fares and period tickets which enable the holder to boast of travelling 10 miles for a penny. Their special rates and fares are accompanied by numerous restrictions, by frequent anomalies, and they change with every season. It is possible to travel only at ordinary fares on one day, to travel at half the cost on another day, at even lower fares on a third! It is possible to get a cheap ticket from station A to London, but not from station B, a few miles off. It is possible to get a cheap ticket from A to B, but not from B to A. I am told, and can believe, that it is possible to be asked more for a return than for two single fares, and more for a season than the aggregate of daily fares. As to the question of speed, there is, in general, small room for criticism in regard to main-line services. Yet even here it is a fact that French trains cover every day a distance of 1,268 miles at 60 m.p.h. or over, as against 861 in Great Britain. And of this total of 861 the G.W. contributes 794, leaving only 66 miles for the three other lines, including those which serve the industrial areas. As regards cross-country services, the facts are amazing, and great improvements could be effected.

Is all this reasonably good salesmanship? There can be no doubt about the answer. The demand for simplification and standardization of railway fares on the one

hand, and for improvement of services on the other, is widespread and urgent.

Now let us turn to the more important question of goods traffic. Here we are on a different wicket. The balance of advantage, given an equal economic start, is definitely on the side of the railways.

What is the problem? To convey a certain object of a certain size and weight as cheaply, as expeditiously and as certainly as possible. Now in its ultimate physical analysis this means the employment of energy in overcoming friction. How is this done with the road vehicle? In the majority of cases by employing a mixture of petrol and air, thus obtaining an impetus which revolves the wheels of the vehicle on a road surface, the energy released being sufficient to overcome the friction encountered. To stop the vehicle involves the manufacture of still more friction to retard and stop the impetus acquired. The friction raised and overcome is all the time working havoc on expensive road-surfaces. Compare this with the railway which employs a smooth steel-tyred wheel on a smooth rail and which works with an immeasurably smaller employment of energy by utilizing a means with less friction, involving less energy, and forming an infinitely more economical medium. So much for the physical side of the matter. Turn now to the matter of control. The road vehicle has to run on a highway which is comparatively narrow, never quite straight, with a varying surface; passing through towns and villages. In the course of its journey it meets other vehicles, some of which are horse-drawn, and must pick its path through cattle, sheep, dogs and fowls. It is subject, in fact, to innumerable causes of delay and risk of accident. Lastly, the vehicle is exposed to the weather and to darkness. Moreover, all these potential causes of delay are independent of the driver and his employer. On the other hand, the railway carries on its work within its own fences, it has complete control of the traffic to be moved, and can work almost as well by night as by day.

Yet in spite of these unassailable advantages, we have the melancholy fact that the traffic handled steadily decreases, and that the "heavy" part of it is decreasing even more rapidly than the lighter consignments. True it is, of course, that the export trade of the country which covers much of the "heavy" traffic has shown terrible losses during the period in question, but is that the whole cause? Does this explain the loss in national traffic? Does it explain the numerous cases in which existing internal traffic for long distances is leaving the rail for the road, even when railway sidings are in existence at each end? Does it explain why even coal is now often moved from pit to consumer by road? Does it explain why even a gigantic locomotive on its way to shipment is carried by a road vehicle rather than by rail? The "Economist" index figures (taking 1924 as the basic year (= 100) show the following comparative results for June 1931: net imports of raw materials 93; non-ferrous metals 126; consumption of iron and steel 83; volume of employment 98·5; shipping movements 103; merchandise on railways 76.

It is clear that there is something lacking in railway service, and all evidence points to two main defects: high rates and less reliable delivery. The lower price of road transport is, of course, largely to be explained by the proportion of road transport expenditure which is borne by tax- and rate-payers who defray part of the cost of road-upkeep, the policing and lighting of streets, and enable road vehicles to avoid all terminal expenditure. Precise and comparable figures are difficult to obtain, but it may be stated that while the total expenditure on the improvement and maintenance of roads has latterly approached £60 millions annually, the gross receipts from taxation of road vehicles realizes some £26 millions; an amount which roughly equals the grants from the Road Fund to the boroughs and councils maintaining the roads. These facts can, if at all, only be met by national action which endeavours to rationalize on

equitable lines the entire transport system of this country—a topic to which further reference will be made later. But the speed and reliability of the railway's service is a matter entirely within its own control, and it is on these defects that the gravamen of the case against their present management chiefly lies. It is possible and practicable to ensure a good, rapid and dependable service, and nothing less will meet the exigencies of present-day conditions. Further, it is necessary for railway managements to bestir themselves to analyse these losses of traffic, to consider how best their customers can be recaptured, to meet them and arrange for better services* and, so far as possible, to transform these losses into profits.

Now, can these improvements be effected, and if so, how? In my opinion, provided there is first a careful and exhaustive examination of the whole matter as one of national importance, and provided such examination leads to an equitable distribution of the nation's traffic between road and rail, much may be done by a systematic effort to overhaul the whole management of the lines.

The technical work of the four systems is on the whole well done, sometimes perhaps too well done for our present state. But the work of management and salesmanship calls aloud for reform. Whether such reform can be effected by the present boards of directors with the numerous demands on their time and energies is, I think, open to doubt. The most successful commercial companies of the present day are those in which the directorate is in the hands of well-trained, whole-time experts, and in my view the time has come when this system should be applied to the highly technical work of the railways.

It is therefore suggested that, if our great lines are to regain, even partially, their old position, it is essential

* It is curious how opinions differ on the different systems. One line has found that good service can be rendered by steam rail-cars at a cost of 11·3 pence per mile with enormous economy, while other groups hardly make use of them.

in the first instance to aim at a definite rationalization of the whole of the country's transport facilities, and at a fair apportionment of all traffic between the media available. In the second place, it is necessary to secure such management as will exhaustively analyse and deal with the present loss of traffic, endeavouring by simplification, certainty and effective salesmanship to recover the railway's old customers on the basis of offering them —not extravagant facilities or ruinously low rates, but a fair bargain for a reasonable sum.

One word in conclusion. This question is one of far more than personal importance to railway shareholders. The country is at a critical stage in its economic history, a fact now generally recognized, and there is a great and growing determination to grapple with our difficulties and to achieve something in the nature of a national regeneration of our industries. In any such movement transport must ever be an important part. It comes in again and again in the whole gamut of industrial life—in the carriage of raw materials, the movement of parts, and of the finished product. The railways must, from the national standpoint, be made to take their part in an industrial re-birth.

Franco-German Relations: A Vicious Circle

By J. D. Gregory

FRANCO-GERMAN relations admittedly lie at the root of the European unrest of to-day, and constitute the chief hindrance to the establishment of a permanent peace, whether political or economic. Under prevailing conditions the position of the two countries are irreconcilable, and no constructive proposal for an effective solution is being made from any quarter.

The conflicting points of view are general knowledge, and, according as they are contemplated from the angle of Paris or Berlin, they are intelligible. The French view is definite and universal among all parties and classes. There is no substantial divergence between the *Action Française* and M. Herriot. It is the settled conviction of the average Frenchman of the *cafés* and it is utterly sincere. Germany, seen through French eyes, is still the Germany of Agadir and the "Panther" —the Germany whose sole method of dealing with her neighbours is intimidation. Despite the transparently sincere professions and efforts of Stresemann and Brüning, the Reich remains at heart entirely unconverted.

Who will seriously dispute that there is not abundant ground for this prevalent conviction? The Stahlhelm parades at Breslau and Coblentz are not mere Sunday outings for the sake of health or pleasure: the bellicose speeches of General von Seekt are not the personal expression of a half-mad fire-eater like Ludendorff; the result of the September elections of last year were not merely due to the passing whim of flapper voters. Nor is the defiant tone of the press confined to the organs of Hugenberg and Hitler; it manifests itself in the most moderate organs of opinion. Nor does the current German ridicule of the French "psychosis of fear" help to calm the nerves of a people who have little use for the science of psychiatry or the jargon of Freud and

Jung. The Frenchman is painfully aware that land frontiers are land frontiers, and he is determined, if he can help it, not to see again in his life-time the little yellow notice of mobilization that has twice within sixty years entailed the ravaging of the richest parts of his sacred soil. Who is going to blame him for erecting an armoured wall across which the age-long enemies shall never pass? The Verdun motto, symbol of his greatest heroism, is graven in his heart.

Now for the other side. To use a popular Wagnerian simile, the dragon Fafner stands—or sulks—on the Seine, guarding the gold of the world, by means of which he can exercise a stranglehold on a helpless, desperate, pacific people, fighting for very existence, paying heavily for its encirclement by ruthless—and racially inferior—allies, impervious to the danger to which, through economic distress, it is exposed from Communism, regardless of the possible collapse of the general European system, egoistic to the point of crime. For the German man in the street, France is the ruthless creditor, the Shylock of Europe, a country without heart or mercy, the embodiment of avarice—cold, cruel, mechanical—in a word, the blood-sucker of mankind, only fit to be boycotted and some day forced to disgorge its ill-gotten gains.

This extreme view is held in every class and station of society, in the Catholic South as well as in the Materialistic North. There is not a small shop-keeper, or a struggling professional man, to whom it has not become an obsession. It is deep-seated and tragic, and is driving hungry students to Hitlerism, Communism—or suicide.

There is thus a yawning gulf that divides, not so much the French Government from the German Government, not merely the French chauvinists from the German nationalists, but the average Frenchman from the German man in the street. Politicians, whether in Geneva or elsewhere, will continue to come forward with singular devices for building the bridge; and no Frenchman or

German denies that the bridge is to the interest of both. The gold is largely lying idle in the Bank of France, because, without confidence, there is no chance of a safe investment for the French *rentier*. He is well aware that a political and financial agreement between France and Germany is a necessity to him.

But at present such an "agreement," if it could be obtained, could only follow conventional lines. No doubt it would go some way to produce a *détente* and so restore the needed confidence. Both France and Germany are governed by men of high integrity and ability in the persons of Monsieur Laval and Dr. Brüning. The joint Franco-German economic committee that has been set up may eventually lead to a commercializing, in some form, of the German payments to France, and both French and Americans may, in the end, realize that they have everything to lose by sitting on their gold in a paper world. But this result would have reference rather to the world situation, in its present economic trials, than to the Franco-German duel as such. Moreover, it would have an economic, rather than a political result, and there is a danger of underrating the political. Any agreement must inevitably be based on the *status quo*, no matter what its form, and, as such, it is bound to leave the relative position of the two countries as it was. In the long run French suspicions of a prospective increase in Hitlerism will not be allayed; German grievances against the Peace Treaties will not be attended to. The only agreement possible can but be a temporary expedient.

The fundamental evil is psychological, and, as such, is dependent on a historical, cultural division dating back to the break-up of the mediæval system and the consequent emergence of the Macchiavellian reversal of international relations. Nowhere did the new principle assert itself more vigorously than in the Prussian State. This is a commonplace, and, though the idealistic defenders of *Realpolitik* within the last two generations

have been at pains to differentiate between pure Machiavellianism and the later Prussian theory of State omnipotence, and to give the latter an ethical substratum, the difference in fact rests on a casuistry, which only a nineteenth-century philosopher of the Fichte-Hegel School could perpetrate. Prussia's attack on Austria in 1866 was a crime against public morals hardly inferior to the partition of Poland, and, whatever Bismarck's private ethical standpoint may have been, he stands condemned no less than Frederick the Great as a true disciple of the great Italian master.

If there was any sense at all in the Great War, if it was not fought in vain, if, in fact, we are not to regard our sacrifices as having been completely thrown away, we must not forget that the fundamental purpose for which we fought has been achieved—but only up to a point. Prussian hegemony in Europe was dealt as severe a blow as was possible in the military conditions of 1918. That a peace dictated in Berlin would have led to a better and more permanent peace is debatable. Facts must be dealt with as they are. Prussian hegemony in Europe was brought to an end, at least temporarily. But in Germany it still survives. It is this point which occupies less attention than it should. Its bearing on the international situation of the moment is underrated, particularly in England, where a certain Victorian sympathy for the Bismarckian achievement still survives, and where not nearly enough distinction is made between Prussia-Germany and the German people.

The French politicians of the peace are largely to blame for the failure to appreciate this vital distinction. Clemenceau, representing the blinded school of French laicism, had no use for a policy that would have elevated Bavaria-Austria at the expense of a radically anti-Catholic State. Out of sheer sectarian prejudice, fed by an illusory obsession of numbers, he was ready to sacrifice the extinction of the evil spirit that provoked the war to a plausible peace that disregarded principles

and itself rested on a basis of *Realpolitik*. Of cultural differences in Europe and their implications his foreign colleagues knew next to nothing; and though the elevation of Poland to a high, though disproportionate, place in the new Europe was a concession in this direction, it was not an adequate counterpoise to the endurance of Prussian hegemony in the new Germany.

Whether at the moment of Versailles it was within the realm of practical politics to enforce a new inter-relationship between members of the Reich, or whether a voluntary reconstruction in return for a less vigorous peace would have been acceptable, must remain hypothetical. The fact remains that Germany was left Prussianized at the very moment when it needed little to push internal German anti-Prussianism to a result, that Austria was left to moan outside the Reich (when she might have played a decentralizing part within), and that, to a great extent, a strong Prussianizing element, namely, the Socialist, has been encouraged, and is still being encouraged, by those powerful political elements in France and England, who are, in effect, always ready to put party before peace.

Non-interference in the internal affairs of a foreign country is a cardinal principle of international relations, and, apart from principle, every attempt to impose an unpopular regime on a foreign country is doomed to failure. There can be no more question of enforcing on another land a constitution than a creed or a manner of living or a habit of dress or food. But that is no reason why, at a moment of despair and in the general interests of peace, the widest and the most vital situations should not be faced in a spirit of give and take, and the foundations of civilization amicably examined at the base. Either Europe is one and can discuss itself with itself, or it is doomed to extinction, either through internal division and decay or ultimately at the hands of an external aggressor.

Is there any chance of a suggestion for a re-construc-

tion of the Reich meeting with any response from within? If Prussian hegemony within Germany were eliminated, would there be any better security for a permanent peace between the Reich and its great neighbour across the Rhine?

It is obviously difficult to assess the strength of the anti-Prussian feeling within Germany itself at the present moment. The centrifugal tendencies, that were rife in Germany and even in Prussia itself under the first shock of defeat, were checked by the circumstances of the Allied occupation, entailing the fear that a federated Rhineland, for instance, would be ultimately exposed to complete detachment from the Reich. The Weimar constitution is more arbitrary in many of its effects than the preceding German system, but one at least of its provisions, particularly the establishment of the Reich's financial sovereignty, was violently opposed by the States, and to-day Bavaria clamours for its revision. The strength of federal aspirations varies in each of the *Länder* according to party complexion, but the focus of State independence is as ever in Bavaria, which clings surreptitiously to its dynasty because it is its main bulwark against progressive centralization. It has, however, been generally overlooked abroad that throughout the last sixty years there has been, apart from the avowed disapproval of the giants of art and philosophy, such as Wagner and Nietzsche, a considerable school of eminent political thought bitterly opposed to the Bismarckian foundation—the most notable, to take two names at random, being Constantine Frantz, of the seventies, to the contemporary professor Förster, of Munich, both eminent authorities on political philosophy. These writers have fearlessly and openly expressed their opinion that the policy of 1866 was destructive, not merely of public morals, but of the ancient German spirit which maintained German prestige, stood for pacific international relations and enabled German traditions, both within and without the political boundaries of Germany, to be

upheld. It is on this basis and this basis alone that French and German civilizations need not be radically opposed to one another. The one is the complement to the other. Together they are necessary to the preservation of Europe in both the political and cultural sense, just as the fusion of Greek and Roman was originally necessary to its creation.

Now a return to a pre-Bismarckian configuration of the Reich is hardly to be thought of. There were vices inherent in the particularism which Bismarck crushed. Their existence was the pretext for his policy, though not its justification in the form which it took. What has passed away cannot be revived. Nevertheless constitutions, forms of government, political systems are mortal, and the post-war constitutions of the old and new States are hybrid inventions, borrowed from every conceivable source, without a trace of originality. They are in their nature experiments, and in most cases have been rendered unworkable by party strife and the utter irresponsibility of both rulers and ruled. In Germany government is being virtually carried on by a species of Order in Council, which means that the Constitution has become unworkable and is suspended.

Is it, then, fantastic to envisage a state of things developing in which the whole machinery of government comes to be overhauled and the Reich reorganized on an entirely new, namely, federal, basis? Clearly, should this eventually take place, it must arise out of the spontaneous will of the German people and not as a result of outside pressure.

But in the despair which is attacking Europe to-day, a solution of the fundamental problem along the lines of German decentralization is not necessarily fanciful. It is not irrational to require that the policy of a great people should conform to the inmost spirit of its own history. The Germans are historically a romantic people, temperamentally alien to *Realpolitik* and adventure; and the mediæval organization was far more an expression

of the German soul than the modern system, with its cult of force, which Prussia has imposed on it. It was capable not merely of uniting divergent interests within the Reich itself, but was able to attract, without need for absorption, the non-German races lying on its two frontiers. It is the ruthless State-egoism of Prussia which has created a suspicious France on the one side and a hostile Poland on the other. It has made the Slav problem what it is to-day, and so has created one of the worst disharmonies in modern Europe.

And for the Germans themselves, as the wiser heads foresaw in the past and deplore to-day, it has paralysed all that content of Germanic tradition which contributed, equally with the French, to make European civilization what it ought to be and could be. As Nietzsche said: "The year 1871 meant the extirpation of the German soul for the benefit of the German Empire."

The current federalist philosophy at the moment necessarily deals with the abstract rather than the concrete; but it is sufficiently conscious of realities to be aware that there is no going back on the past. A future federalism, if it is to be, will be dependent less on the actual new configuration than on the spirit which animates it, though it must, of course, primarily involve a substantial change in inter-State relationship, which will give that spirit free scope.

From what other quarter is there possibility of change? The revision of treaties is manifestly so delicate a matter that it may be ruled out for many years to come. The correction of existing territorial frontiers would not bring a mitigation of the rampant nationalism which is leading to international destruction; probably it would make confusion worse confounded. The only adequate guarantee for peace, therefore, is a diminution of political in favour of cultural values, a realization of the greater worth of their mutual recognition. The true bridge across the Rhine would then be moral rather than metal.

That the disestablishment of Prussia would contribute

potently to this end can hardly be doubted, and it should produce an immediate reaction on existing political stringency. It might quite conceivably result in a reversal of outlook and practice in the vexed question of Minorities; a wider view of the *Anschluss*, which would *ipso facto* lose much of its present terrors; a conception of Alsace as the clearing house of French and German cultures; and from Danzig to the Carpathians, an approximate reconciliation between German and Slav. In other words, a federalized, decentralized Germany, reassuming its ancient soul, without sacrificing its industrial efficiency (which operates in another sphere) would meet East and West in a spirit totally different from that which has for two generations kept the world on tenterhooks.

Berlin must cease, once and for all, to hold the German reins. But, on her side, France must modify her claim to a monopoly of civilization and, without abandoning the inner consciousness of her age-long unity, her continuity, her Roman heritage, or her instinct for true values, resign herself to no longer marching visibly at the head of humanity. For it is not France and Germany, but humanity, which is at stake; and humanity can only be saved, not by a single privileged nation or class, but by solidarity and co-operation.

Vallombrosa

A November Idyll

By Patrick R. Chalmers

THE roof's fallen down
In the palace of Pan
Its golden renown
Is to catch as catch can,
For it's blown through the wood
By a wind silver thin,
As gold as what's good
And as red as a sin;

And the nymphs, so moon white,
And the dryads nut-brown,
Feel the cold of a night
Now the roof's tumbled down,
And, where the wreck smoulders
And drifts on the breeze,
They sit and shrug shoulders
And hug their bare knees.

The Book of the Month*

By E. S. P. Haynes

IT is a pity that this large volume about the Duke of Wellington should be bound so indifferently; but the paper cover is worth preserving and the volume itself is full of beautiful portraits and admirable maps.

Wellington's own dispatches have given the world most of what it wants to know about his military campaigns, though perhaps his work in India has not been much appreciated. There is, however, no doubt that his achievements as a statesman have never been properly respected or appreciated. As Mr. Guedalla points out in his preface: "His subsequent career in politics has done more, perhaps, than any other influence to efface his memory, since it provoked the Whigs. By a peculiar division of labour, British history, quite considerable parts of which have been made by Tories, has been very largely written by Whigs; and Whig historians are a little apt to dispose summarily of Tory reputations. Viewed by such eyes, the Duke became a stiff-necked conqueror trailing an unwelcome scabbard into civilian assemblies. It was even feared that his faith in democracy was imperfect, that he did not trust the people. Why should he? Half his life had been devoted to a war against the French Revolution, and it was hardly likely that he would find revolution any more congenial because it happened to be English. Crowds had no sanctity for him—he had seen far too many—and the purely arithmetical basis of democracy failed to impress the Duke. Shocked by this revelation, the nineteenth century tended to belittle his entire achievement. Perhaps the twentieth may feel inclined to number it among his merits."

To-day, perhaps, the Duke's opinions are more likely to win support when politicians of all parties are united by no tie so strong as their common distrust of the popular vote. Mr. Guedalla, who has contested more than one

* The Duke. By Philip Guedalla. (Hodder & Stoughton. 25s.)

Liberal constituency, is nevertheless sympathetic in regard to the Duke's view of democracy: "England was deeply moved that autumn; for 1819 saw the first stirrings of democracy. But democracy was hardly likely to be more congenial to Wellington than arson. For the sanctity of numbers made no particular appeal to him. Less interested in the numerical support for any policy than in its merits, he was no democrat. How could he be? He had passed a lifetime in the constant endeavour to act wisely; and in almost every case wise action had been diametrically opposed to a crowd's desires. Indian administration in 1802 was a poor school for democrats; Dublin Castle was an embodied denial of democracy; and he was unlikely to absorb its tenets in the Peninsula, since generals in the field are not dependent on securing a majority of votes in favour of next season's plan of operations. Besides, the crowds of his experience had been almost invariably wrong. A London mob had hooted him for the Convention of Cintra; and as he bled the French Empire to death in the Peninsula, he had been pursued by Opposition invectives. It was French mobs that had infected Paris with the Terror and inflicted upon Europe the long nightmare of the Empire; even now their sudden fevers were a constant menace to European peace. Spanish mobs had inspired the ignoble babble of the Cortes and deepened their country's peril in its darkest hour. And was there any ground for hope that English mobs would be wiser?"

These remarks may soften the impact on a modern Liberal of the Duke's own observations made in 1830 in regard to the Reform Bill. "I never read or heard of any measure up to the present moment which in any degree satisfies my mind that the state of the representation can be improved . . . I am fully convinced that the country possesses at the present moment a Legislature which answers all the good purposes of legislation, and this to a greater degree than any Legislature ever has answered in any country whatever. I will go further, and say,

that the Legislature and the system of representation possess the full and entire confidence of the country . . . I will go still further, and say, that if at the present moment I had imposed upon me the duty of forming a Legislature for any country, and particularly for a country like this, in possession of great property of various descriptions—I do not mean to assert that I could form such a Legislature as we possess now, for the nature of man is incapable of reaching such excellence at once—but my great endeavour would be to form some description of Legislature which would produce the same results."

The lawyers of Lincoln's Inn may like to remember that their predecessors gave sanctuary to the Duke when on June 18, 1832, he was pelted and molested by a mob on the way from the Mint on account of such sentiments as those expressed above.

The Duke's attitude to the Reform Bill was quite logical. The old system had worked; would the new system work? He had no illusions about democracy. In the name of democracy the Whigs had done their best to hinder him as a general. Even the Whigs of his period did not like London crowds, especially when their windows were broken with stones as in the case of Apsley House. One result of the Reform Bill was to destroy the power of the Government to provide seats for ministers in search of them. This has since embarrassed more than one Liberal Government as, for instance, in the case of the late Mr. Masterman. Even more recently, however, safeguards against the exact equivalent of borough mongering seem to be lacking. On September 7 last the *Times* recorded that the executive of the National Union of Railwaymen had "instructed" six members of Parliament whose election expenses the Union had paid, to fall into line with the Parliamentary Labour Party in opposing the National Government. This order was issued without reference to the views of the constituencies for which the members sat or to the responsibility of the members to those constituencies. The Duke of Wellington

has surely been justified in refusing to accept the Reform Bill as the beginning of the Millennium.

Ten years after the Bill had become law the criminal code had very properly been improved in many ways (but this would probably have happened anyhow) and the Duke may perhaps appear a little antiquated in regard to such matters as military flogging; but he had lived in a stern school of experience. No doubt he may have been starved on certain sides; his early renunciation of his beloved violin is not without significance.

I must admit that in my youth I regarded the Iron Duke as an embodiment of rather jejune virtues, as a champion of Spartan against Athenian qualities. Yet both my Eton and Balliol tutors pointed out that as time went on the glory of Byron and Napoleon would fade in contrast to that of Scott and Wellington. As regards Wellington this is perhaps more obvious to us at this moment than it was to an Oxford undergraduate in the late nineties. At the end of the nineteenth century society seemed so stable that we mocked at our ancestors for limiting the circulation of sceptical books. Goldwin Smith in 1860 discussed what would happen to the world when the political and religious assumptions of European society were questioned by the man in the street as opposed to the man in the study. He thought that when the moment came the world would go through "a very bad quarter of an hour." He was right, and we are not yet at the end of that "quarter of an hour."

The Duke had to cope with the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars, and the Chartists; while the Ministers of our day have had to deal with the Great War, the Russian Revolution, and the General Strike of 1926. The Whigs in the House of Commons may certainly have hampered the Duke in Spain; but the Congress of Vienna was all the more efficient for being able to ignore demagogues and journalists. The Reform Bill mobs were at least liable in the last resort to military control and had no wealthy Trade Unions to back them. The Duke's task

may in some respects have been a little easier than that of a modern Statesman; but the atmosphere of our period necessarily makes us appreciate his courage, intelligence, and patriotism more sympathetically than most of our Victorian forbears could.

If the Duke were to revisit the modern world he would find not only many of his forebodings realized but many of his ideas more popular than they were in his day. Monarchy has fared badly but democracy perhaps even worse. Monarchy may survive in England, but what about democracy after the *coup d'état* of the National Government? The Duke might not take the trouble to read Spengler; but he might excusably feel that he had begun to see the cyclic decay that Spengler describes, the growing tyranny of speech over action as a factor in government. No names need be mentioned; we need only look at a list of Prime Ministers from 1850 onwards. Not that the Duke lacked the gift of expression either in English or French; but his *métier* was action; it was not the discovery of the *mot juste* or of the election catch-word served up with the arts of the conventicle.

Let it not be forgotten that a reputation for justice enabled him to settle personally the whole question of reparations in Europe after the war to the satisfaction of all parties, and that he and his colleagues left a legacy of peace to Europe for forty years. It may be that if he could return to us to-day even the vast population of these islands who are compulsorily taught and habitually trained not to think (as Mr. Snowden has discovered to his cost) might return to some kind of political sanity and vindicate once more the virtues of individual effort and responsibility against the tyranny of oligarchs who masquerade as democrats. The story of his career may at least inspire hope and courage at a time when these qualities seem least conspicuous.

Mr. Guedalla is to be congratulated on a really great biography which has occupied from first to last four of five years of his career. His style improves as time goes

on, for the purple patches and epigrams are now fused into crisp sentences and acute judgments. He is as impartial in his general view as in the political estimates already mentioned. He is also accurate in his facts and lively in narrative.

His success will go some way to vindicate the cause of history as an art. The inaccuracy and violent prejudices of James Anthony Froude gave a considerable impetus to the dry-as-dust school which dominated Oxford and other universities thirty years ago. Its influence even infected the romantic soul of Professor York Powell.

The book, in spite of its length, is remarkably concise. There is not even room for an extract from Tennyson's ode on the Duke's funeral. Yet there is not a dull page, even when the subject matter is necessarily humdrum.

Some readers will remember the pleasant liveliness which Mr. Guedalla imported into legal problems and the law courts and the lively regret felt by many lawyers when he succumbed to Literature and abandoned Law. This biography, coupled with the volume on Palmerston, will do much to reconcile them to the proved wisdom of the author's choice. Moreover his legal training has obviously equipped him for tackling many political questions which sometimes baffle the academic historian.

The New Opportunity

By Ernest J. P. Benn

MOST people are agreed that the world is in a muddle, that a great deal of wrong exists, that things might be a good deal better and life a good deal easier. Our conversation as well as our literature is full of complaint, no one is satisfied, nobody wants to leave things as they are. The millionaire with the tax demands upon him is, of course, convinced of the error of our modern ways, but so also is the beneficiary of the taxes when collected. All agree on the need for better arrangements, but at that point agreement ends and we enter upon a confusion of thought and proposal such as the world has never previously known. We do not, as of old, divide ourselves into friends and enemies of reform; we are all reformers, but all in favour of different sorts of reform. Thus, to listen to our conversation, our troubles are not so much due to something we have done in the past, as to our having failed to adopt the particular sort of reform or change with which the individual speaker is for the moment identified. It is, or so the fashion in argument runs, not so much our past actions which are to blame, for we are the helpless victims of our circumstances and environment; we have no doubt done our best, we are in trouble " through no fault of our own," but we have been unfortunate in lacking that particular spark of genius represented by the particular proposal under discussion. If, therefore, we will proceed to some new theoretical method, if we will co-ordinate, rationalize, internationalize, or de-naturalize, all will at once be well.

The method of argument does credit to our manners. We have to a large extent given up apportioning blame, we no longer revile dukes and landlords, we are much more polite and we talk of entering upon a new era of science and skill when, with universal knowledge of everything, all our needs and desires will find an ordered satisfaction as we merely turn on the switch.

It is not only in our politics that these tendencies are traceable. In every department of our life we decline to believe that there is any good except in change. We are the most conceited generation in history. To us the past is the symbol of error or ignorance, anything which ever happened before is wrong. We have passed the elementary stage when there was satisfaction in the claim to be God's chosen people, we have found God out and are doing better. A literature which merely reflected our lives and our emotions is Victorian and useless, we egg our fiction writers on to " otherness." The age-old partnership between man and woman is a primitive conception, the responsibility of the parent to the child and the duties of the child to the parent are handicaps which a better system will remove. Conservatism is for the moment non-existent, nobody wants to conserve, everybody wants to alter.

The dangerous character of the whole business is illustrated when we look at political policies and find that there is nothing but programmes. Politics must be *constructive*, they must *do* something, principles have ceased to be of interest, they are shibboleths. While this madness lasts, it follows that failure counts for nothing. As each new Act of Parliament adds to our difficulties or as each devotee of the new sexology commits suicide, we rush to stronger doses of the same drugs. The Tories are always dishing the Whigs. In politics we never repeal, we always amend; it seems as if we must go on down the slope at an ever-increasing rate.

The early penny dreadfuls, the precursors of Edgar Wallace, used to put it " Once on board the lugger and the girl is ours." The modern political pirate has the same satisfactory feeling. It does not matter which party programme first names the girl, once there she is the bond slave of the politicians, who all in turn will do their share of destructive work upon her.

Such is modern public life, or such was public life up to the fall of the pound. That dramatic event marks

the end of the maddest period in political history, and public opinion at long last has been shaken into sense, or at least into a condition of healthy fright which leaves room for sense.

Now the conclusion is inescapable that the political method is wrong.

For well nigh half a century the vote has assumed powers and qualities which it can never possess, and we have relied upon political force to perform functions which are only capable of performance at the hands of the individual citizen. Illustrations are all around us. Work comes from the desire of man to do it and not from Acts of Parliament. Wealth comes from work and not from Parliamentary Budgets. These things destroy, they do not create. The power of the politician and of parliament fattens on the ignorance of the general public, ignorance in itself very natural and proper. What, for instance, should thirty million electors know about the technicalities of coal-getting? Obviously and necessarily —nothing. And yet coal-getting has been the plaything of politics and parliaments for seventy years, and scores of Coal Acts have each in turn produced effects to belie the arguments of their promoters.

What has happened in coal has happened to some extent in every industry to which parliament has turned its attention. Our trades can be graded in order of prosperity and usefulness, and these qualities will be found to be in inverse ratio to the amount of political attention with which they have been favoured.

The difficulty of the political method can best be explained by reference to a non-industrial field of which all are to some extent qualified as critics.

Consider the political history of education. First we make it compulsory; there is mild objection when the proposal comes forward, but we carry it through and nobody thereafter dare say a word against the principle of compulsion. It is apparently beside the point to observe that we intended the compulsory principle to

apply to reading, writing and arithmetic, and that the quality of these things has deteriorated ever since we put political power behind them.

No one will listen to the suggestion that the principle of compulsion was not, when accepted, intended to apply to any of the modern ways of misinforming youth of the real facts of life. Compulsion is accepted and we must therefore compel, even if the text-book is written by Sidney Webb. We move on to the logical corollary of the first error and provide that what is compulsory must be free, and from that to standardization and uniformity. Uniformity in turn excludes religious and every other difference and places the whole mass of rising humanity at the mercy of passing political folly. Thus, if at any moment Whitehall is more impressed with the theories of G. D. H. Cole than with the philosophy of Samuel Smiles, the whole of society is robbed of the benefit of the clash of opposing ideas and is driven headlong into the errors of one or the other.

But political damage goes further than that, and the end of it is not yet in sight. There grows up quite naturally a vested interest in this *free* education and it becomes more expensive than anything that was ever paid for. All the natural tests of the value of a teacher disappear and the teacher tends to become an automatic machine. The right of the children to something labelled education, being admitted, is no longer discussed. The responsibility of the parent in the matter, being denied, is no longer mentioned, and there looms on the political horizon a new class of interest, the wants, desires, and later the rights of the teachers themselves. These multiply, just as weeds multiply when the hoe is relegated to the limbo of Victorianism.

We have reached the stage when the parent is compelled to send his child to school, to learn something which is never discussed; when, having apparently nothing to pay, he can have nothing to say about it; and when it costs him ten times as much as his parents ever

spent upon the same object. As nobody pays directly everybody pays much more, and all the correctives and inconveniences of competition and criticism are removed.

In practice, of course, things are not as bad as this description of them would appear to indicate. Our educational standards are well below other countries but still fairly good. That happy condition is due to the qualities of individual character bred in us by our ancestry and still remaining, in part, notwithstanding political arrangements which deny their existence and which must, if allowed to persist, eventually destroy them. Millions of parents are dumb, thousands of teachers are vocal, all effective tests or standards have gone, and we are left with a monster which only serves us well because it happens to want to do so. That is the best that can be said. If Professor John Macmurray in the Broadcast Symposium (5) Learning to Live is in any degree representative of educational authority, then most sane people would save the rates and taxes and shut up the schools.

The army and the navy are other examples of proper governmental activities which must continue and must be paid for without any possibility of applying those checks and restraints which necessarily govern the ordinary actions of the ordinary individual, and are only mentioned here to illustrate the argument.

A well-regulated society would recognize that it could only afford such luxuries as blank cheques to Education and Defence on condition that the rest of its activities were kept free from the economic abuses to which these things are by their nature subject.

The modern politician, however, takes another view. He argues that Parliamentary control is so successful in Education and Defence that it must therefore be also applied to banking, finance, employment, housing, agriculture, imports, exports, and indeed to everything else.

The lay reader with some knowledge of education will find no difficulty in tracing the effects of the same

governmental methods in all those departments of human affairs to which those methods have been applied. They always end in the subservience of the original object to a number of secondary and consequential desires or purposes. We set out to house the poor and end by paying the builders twice the price for which they used to house the rich. Then we discover that the slums remain and we have really impoverished society as a whole for the benefit of the lower middle class. We decide to help agriculture and trade and we instruct government departments to give effect to our wishes. After 30 years we find the expenses of the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Agriculture are exactly fifty times as large as they were, while our trade is halved and our agriculture is in ruins. So the tale might proceed, it is always the same.

Coming back to where we began. Things are in a muddle—Why? There are still a few courageous bigots left who, parrot-like, tell us that capitalism is bankrupt and private enterprise has failed. Not only is the opposite the obvious truth, but it should be added that private enterprise has proved more wonderful than its most enthusiastic admirers could possibly believe, in that it survives and is still able to balance the budget of all this political foolery.

The only need of the time is a real Conservative policy—not, be it noted, a programme. The Conservative Party should be purged of persons with schemes. We want no more Conservatives to tell us they can do better than the Liberals or the Socialists. We want Conservatives who will conserve, who will recognize the awful waste of the use of the vote for uneconomic and therefore immoral purposes. Conservatives who will tell the people that the pound has gone and our credit and inheritance have been squandered from a failure to understand that the People keep the State and not the State the People: that good government can give the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and

very little else: that democracy involves the right to misgovern as well as to govern, and the fact that something is wanted has little or nothing to do with the way it may be secured. The sober and wiser public of to-day is ready for a leadership that will reverse all the political folly with which we have been afflicted since the Fabians began fifty years ago. Their notions and their methods, accepted to some degree by all parties, have brought us to the brink of disaster. The common people are in no doubt about the matter; will the politicians prove equal to the new opportunity?

Foch as he was*

By Henry W. Nevinson

IT is often said that the Great War revealed no man of supreme military genius—no one on the level of Wellington, Napoleon, or Moltke, not to mention Cromwell, Marlborough, or the great heroes of old. Perhaps that is true, for the war had too many fronts and the problems on each were too various for the distinction of any one general. But ask a man who served through the war upon any front, and he will probably give the second place to Haig, Allenby, Falkenhayn, Mackensen, Ludendorff or Pétain; but almost certainly he will put Foch first. His final position as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in France gave Foch the opportunity of striking the decisive blows which ended the war, and the glory has remained with him.

On the whole the general verdict is justified, but Captain Liddell Hart, so experienced a writer on military history, does not add to the chorus of glorification. In this large and carefully documented book (it runs to more than 500 big pages and the authorities are fully given) he shows us the man as he was during the preparation of youth, early manhood, and when, in approaching age, the climax came with the four terrible years. We are again shown the little officer as we saw him during the war—short in the legs, rather insignificant in face but for the brilliant eyes, the wrinkles of ascetic industry, and the projecting chin; much given to his nation's use of gesture (though he always denied it), and capable of biting and even of insolent epigrams when his opinions were crossed. Capable also of conceiving gigantic schemes which ended in failure and the loss of many lives.

We have vivid descriptions of him just before the war when he had been instructing in the *Ecole de Guerre*, and once towards the end, when the perilous crisis was

* "Foch, the Man of Orleans," by Liddell Hart. (Eyre and Spottiswoode Limited. 21s.)

at its worst. His subordinates, we read, declared him to be insane, but he did not care, for he was more concerned to generate "will" than to foster understanding. And again, "The light in his eye spiritualizes a face that otherwise would be almost brutal. He is a priest who judges, condemns, and teaches in the name of a dogma that inspires him, and to which he has devoted all the strength of his mind and heart. General Foch is a prophet inspired by his God."

There we feel the touch of the religious or mystical influence which attended him throughout life. But even more characteristic is the account we have of him during the extreme peril of the German break-through in March and April, 1918. "Foch, as always," we read, "was guided by faith. *Le bon Dieu* would absolve him from the need to answer awkward questions":

> "The answer that he gave to a 'doubting Thomas' during the crisis summed up not only his view but his direction of the battle: 'Materially, I do not see that victory is possible. Morally, I am certain that we shall gain it.'"

During the same crisis we hear another witness:

> "His gestures are still prodigiously prompt, prodigiously expressive. He showed me the map where, in diverse colours, was written the story of a battle nearing its end. He explained its phases. And then: 'There! That's past. What had we got to do? To stop them at all cost.' He threw out his arms and drew them back gradually; the pocket seemed to grow beneath my eyes. 'And then to stand firm. That's now!' His two hands plunged towards the ground in a gesture that would have arrested the universe. 'And finally—this'll come later—that!' His arms thrown open anew, he brought his fists forward to crash round the venturesome foe."

There we see both the personal power of the man and the rigid idealism that led him to so many errors. One of his early errors was in sharing the common French belief that the war would begin with a German invasion through Lorraine, where, at Nancy, he had been stationed. This is the more strange because as late as 1911 he had been planning for the campaign in Belgium in co-operation with Sir Henry Wilson, and if that plan had been acted

upon from the first the misery of Belgium and north-east France might possibly have been spared.

Another error, very characteristic of French arrogance as a military race, was his contempt of the British on sea as well as on land. This attitude of national superiority lasted to the end, though it was our troops who just in time stayed the German advance upon Paris, and our navy that saved the French coast towns from bombardment and invasion.

It is recorded that when, shortly before the war, Sir Henry Wilson, who became his closest British friend and also his outspoken critic, asked Foch what he would say was the smallest force that could be of practical assistance to him in France in the event of war, Foch instantly replied: "A single private soldier; and we would take good care that he was killed." The answer is enigmatic, but I can hardly believe it a compliment. More definitely insolent was his first remark to General Gough directly after the historic gathering at Doullens when Foch was, in fact, given command over the united armies. Going at once to Gough's headquarters in Dury, he cried to him: "What are you doing here?" "I was waiting for you," said Gough. "You should not wait for me in that way without doing anything," Foch replied, "or else your corps commanders will be on your heels, and everyone will stampede." One must remember that Gough was not only a man of extraordinary courage and energy, but that the defeat of the Fifth Army under his command was due to the extension and weakening of his line in order to assist the French on his right.

Still more mistaken was Foch's agreement with the prevailing French idea of our Navy's assistance before the war began. Sir Henry Wilson (that exact and dangerous diarist) records that Castelnau and Joffre in 1913 did not think the British Navy worth a single bayonet, and that "Foch was exactly of the same opinion." National pride will excuse much, but it was worse when contempt was shown by a habit of throwing

our men first into the point of danger. I well remember the complaints that created in our ranks the word " to deb " derived from the name of General Debeney. It meant, as Captain Liddell Hart says, " the practice of so timing your own push that your neighbour pushed first, and thus loosened the resistance that faced you." The neighbour to Debeney's First Army was a British Division.

But, after all, Foch's main errors up to nearly the end of the war were due to his rigid adherence to the precept he had learnt in the schools from the works of Clausewitz, the German authority on strategy and tactics : " Attack, Attack, always Attack." The rule was specially suited to Foch's own temperament, and in most cases to the French temperament as well. But it took no account of the terrible defences that modern inventions had added : the defences of barbed wire and machine-guns, that played the chief tactical parts in the war along the French frontier. Nor did Foch take sufficient account of " the fifth element, mud." Being a man of unusual physical energy himself, he could not realize the fatigue and misery of the troops whom he ordered to the attack, and so his orders could not be interpreted in his spirit. In fact, he too often mistook his orders for accomplishment. It is a common mistake, such as I have often known under Turkish administration. It is the same mistake to be seen at almost all party meetings, where if a resolution is passed everyone is as content as though the thing were done.

The author of this volume, which is in fact a history of the war in France, does not hesitate to point out all such errors and more. What is worse, he reveals, partly by aid of Sir Henry Wilson's diaries, the painful intrigues and jealousies secretly, but continually, prevailing behind the front : intrigues, suspicions, distrusts, and national jealousies involving the lives of hundreds of thousands among the fighting soldiers. The Somme cost us 60,000 men in 1916, Passchendaele probably as many more. In his crazy adventure in Champagne Nivelle lost

120,000. The losses were beyond calculation throughout, and the story of indecision and incompetence is pitiful.

Amidst it all, and in spite of his errors, where was Foch's greatness proved? What is the justification of his fame? It was all due to his indomitable spirit, his unyielding confidence. Like the Maid of Orleans, he felt himself divinely inspired. During the period of our greatest gloom, after Passchendaele, after Caporetto, and after the German terrific advance in the spring of 1918, he still retained his faith in victory. Just before the turning of the tide, when Ludendorff had brought the German armies within range of Amiens, we used to hear at the British front that Foch's one remark had been: "I pity Ludendorff." This volume does not record that great saying, but on a slightly earlier occasion he said, in concluding his criticism of his adversary's plans: "I wonder whether Ludendorff knows his business; I do not believe that he does."

Partly owing to our pitiless blockade, partly owing to the appalling deaths by influenza, and partly to our general advance after his "black day" of August 8, and the subsequent storming of the Hindenburg Line, Ludendorff physically collapsed early in October, and within five weeks the war was ended. But the main cause, the spirit of inspiration pervading the Allied armies, came from the spirit of Foch himself, Commander-in-Chief of the united forces. With rare modesty he thus described his service: "I was no more than the conductor of an orchestra. A vast orchestra, of course. Say, if you like, that I beat time well." I should rather give him the praise given by the Romans to a general at the blackest moment of their fortunes: "He did not despair of the Republic." The reading of this admirable book is assisted by a series of sixteen military maps.

The Return

By Mrs. Belloc Lowndes

OLD Madame Aubert—small, spare, with a somewhat stern face—was bustling, aimlessly, about her wide, low-ceilinged kitchen. She had been up since five o'clock, and even now she found it difficult, nay, impossible, to keep still. A woman named Elise Poulin lived with her as half-maid, half-slave, half-tyrant, but Madame Aubert had wished to be alone when welcoming her son home from the German prison camp where he had been for two years, so she had sent Elise away for two nights.

For many a long year, now, La Mère Aubert, as she was disrespectfully called behind her back in the village, had done very little housework, and she was surprised to find how tired sweeping, dusting, and a very little cooking, had made her feel this morning. But she had been at work for hours, making the roomy old house look even more clean and speckless than it always was.

Not only did she feel, this morning, like the widow whose son was raised from the dead, but exalted in her knowledge that her Louis would now manage the great rose-growing business which she and her late husband had built up during what had been twenty years of happy, hard-working married life.

It was late June, and last evening she had made a complete tour of the nurseries which spread behind the house, both up-hill, where they met the chestnut groves of Marly-le-Roi, and down-hill, towards the swift-flowing, winding Seine. With a keen, inward satisfaction, she had noted that everything there, also, had been made perfect to greet the eager eye of the young master who had been so long away.

For the hundredth time since she had come downstairs this morning, Madame Aubert glanced up at the wall clock which she and her husband had bought second-hand at Versailles, out of their first small profits, near on forty years ago.

It was nine-twenty; that meant that there were forty long minutes to be lived through before her son could be here. So, sitting down at last, her mind travelled backwards through those terrible war years, when the iron had entered into her soul. Her husband had died in a Territorials' camp early in '15; and then her son, Louis—well-educated, highly intelligent, aged twenty-nine—after two years spent as a *poilu* in the trenches, had been taken prisoner in '16. Twice his mother had received a letter from him, and, in April, '18, she had heard from the Ministry of War of his death.

And then—it seemed like a miracle, and to the mother it was a miracle—seven months after the Armistice she had received an official telegram informing her that her son was on his way back from Germany. But from Louis she had had no word, and so she had felt a sensation of immeasurable relief when, three days ago, had come a laconic telegram :—"Aubert arriving Wednesday morning." As there was still but one morning train from Paris, she knew that he would be home by ten o'clock.

At last she rose from her stiff, upright chair, and looked round her, consideringly. Yes, everything was in its place, exactly as it had been when Louis and his father had gone away on that first Sunday of August '14, which no one who was then in France will ever forget.

She had even brought down the fine carved wooden rocker cradle which had been always kept in the kitchen after her son had emerged from babyhood, but which she had moved up into her bedroom when there had come the news of his death. Till to-day the cradle had stood by her bed, and often, during those tragic years, she would put out her hand in the darkness of the night, and start it rocking . . . . But now the cradle stood once more where Louis Aubert *jeune* had always seen it stand all through his placid youth, near the Breton cupboard which had been one of the few extravagances of his mother's long, prosperous life. And on the centre of the kitchen table she had placed, last evening, a blue

bowl filled with wellnigh perfect specimen blossoms of the red rose, "Louise Aubert," called after herself.

She now walked across to the door, and set it wide open, and then she stepped out on to the square paved courtyard which gave on to the main street of the village.

Before the war no day had gone by, during the spring, summer, and autumn months of the year, without the Auberts welcoming, here, one or more of their good customers, and so even their courtyard had always been something of a show place. There were roses there, standards growing in huge tubs painted bright green, and creeping roses trained, espalier-wise, against the pale-red brick walls on either side.

The mother told herself that when Louis came through the wrought-iron gate yonder, he would surely feel that he had never been away—that the years of fighting, and far more terrible years spent in a prison-camp had only been a fearful dream, from which he was now awakened.

As Madame Aubert threaded her way among the rose-trees she suddenly became aware that pressed against the railings of her wrought-iron gate was the thin, white face of a youth who was a stranger to the village. From what she could see of him he was very shabbily dressed, and he looked pitifully weary.

Now, from time immemorial, beggars have made their way on foot from one part of France to another, and everywhere it has been the kindly custom to give such folk either a trifle of money, a bite and a sup, or both. But, though Madame Aubert's heart felt unwontedly tender this morning, it was far too full for her to give a thought to anyone but her son, and so she felt irritated when she saw the stranger step aside, and grope for the bell.

She walked forward, quickly, feeling in the pocket of her apron as she did so. Then slowly, unwillingly, she unlocked the gate.

After all it would have to be opened very soon for Louis? And then she became aware of something peculiar-looking in the face of the young man who stood there. He was very pale and thin, indeed, emaciated; but what struck her with surprise and dismay was that he was blind.

"Is this Madame Aubert's house?" he asked; and she answered, gently for her, "What is it you want with her, my boy?"

"Please lead me to her," he said, in a low, refined voice and, after a moment of hesitation, he added, "I am very hungry." She told herself, pitifully, that the poor lad was undoubtedly an "intellectual" who had fallen on evil days as a result of the war, and so she took hold of his hand. "I am Madame Aubert," she said kindly. "But I am much occupied just now."

It was clear that *les bonnes sœurs* who had just come back from their convalescent hospital to the village, had sent this blind youth on to her.

But what could she do with such an unfortunate, maimed creature to-day? For one thing, the sight of him would certainly recall dreadful memories of her son—who would be here in a very few minutes. Even so, after a moment's thought, she made up her mind that she could not send this lad away if he was hungry . . . . She, too, had been hungry, and very hungry at times, during the war.

"You can come and sit down for a while in a little arbour in my garden, on the other side of the house," she said, quietly. "There I will bring you some soup and bread. But you must stay there, and wait without moving, like a good boy, till I have time to come and talk to you."

Glancing at her fat silver watch she saw it was now seven minutes to the hour. That meant she had full ten minutes—perhaps indeed more, for the horse omnibus by which she knew her son would come from the station

was always a few minutes late, and sometimes the driver would go a good deal out of his way to oblige a customer.

Madame Aubert took his hand and led the young stranger through the high brilliantly blooming standards into her kitchen, for that was the shortest way to the garden. When she had sat him down in the tea rose-wreathed scented arbour, she saw that he had taken out of a pocket, and now held in his thin hand, his Soldier's Book. Therein would be found not only the poor boy's name, but his regiment, and where he had served in the war, details with which she might as well make herself acquainted now, as it would save time afterwards. So she took it from his unresisting hand, and opened it.

And then her eyes saw, as in a blinding flash, his name—and that name was Louis Aubert!

She opened her mouth, but for a few moments it was as if she had lost command of her power of speech. Suddenly the power came back. "What is this?" she exclaimed in a harsh, discordant voice—a voice she scarcely knew for her own. "Who told you to come here? You are an impostor! Your name is not Louis Aubert."

But even as she uttered the words, she knew all too well that Louis Aubert was this poor lad's name—too.

The young fellow stood up, and his face began twitching with bewilderment and fear. "But I assure you, madame, that my name is Louis Aubert," he said in a quavering tone. "I have forgotten everything else—but of that I am quite sure, for it is in my Soldier's Book. You will see that for yourself, if you will open my Book."

Again, it was as if she could not speak. And, again—the power of speech came back.

"Who sent you here?" she asked, speaking now in a low, toneless voice.

"The officer whom I saw last evening, and who gave me ten francs out of his own pocket, wrote down the address for me. He told me my mother had moved to this village, and so I have walked here this morning from Paris, though more than one good stranger gave me a

lift in his cart. They all told me that I should be welcome, and that my mother would surely know me, even if I did not know her. I told the officer I had no mother now, as she died when I was a child. But he said that was nonsense, as at one time there had been many, many letters from her, asking for my whereabouts. And yet—I ask you, madame—does a son forget his mother? Assuredly not."

Madame Aubert remained silent. Her heart was filled with a terrible flood of impotent anger, and utter desolation.

"Sit down," she said in a hard tone. "And I will take a little turn, and think over what to do."

She left him and began walking, feeling as if she, too, were blind, to the end of the path which led from her beautiful garden into the rose nurseries. There, behind the gate, she stood for a long time, gazing unseeingly over the great scented fields of roses, sloping down to the winding Seine.

Suddenly, there came a strange, a stinging thought. She faced the fact that her lot might have been even more agonizing than it had now become. Her son might have come back to her blind, shell-shocked, having forgotten his mother. She found the courage, within herself, to thank God that this anguish had been spared her.

Slowly she turned and came back to where the lad was sitting as if staring into vacancy.

"You had better come into my kitchen," she said, in a sombre tone. "I have some soup warming there."

Taking hold again of his hand she led him back into the house, and sat him down at her kitchen table, and giving him a bowl full of soup, she placed a spoon in his nerveless hand.

As she did so, ten o'clock struck from the church tower, for this awful change in Madame Aubert's life had only taken a few minutes for its accomplishment. Yet, already, she had settled everything; the room

this blind lad was henceforth to occupy upstairs; the easy work he should do, that of helping in the pot-pourri making, which before the war had been a pleasant and profitable side-line of business, and which the firm was again beginning to do with England; even she had decided on the choice of the two—Elise Poulin and a certain young lawyer—who would look after this unhappy, shell-shocked Louis Aubert, and manage the small annuity she intended should be his after her own death.

All at once she heard the gate swing open. A spasm of pain crossed her face, and instinctively she straightened her spare, upright figure, prepared to face some indiscreet old friend and neighbour, who wished to be the first to see her son and congratulate him on his release.

Slowly, reluctantly, she walked to the door and pushed it open, while swift, eager steps strode towards her, threading their way through the miniature rose forest. And then, for a moment, she believed herself to be suffering from a frightful form of hallucination—the effect, maybe, of the awful blow she had just received from what had seemed to her to be a hideously malicious Providence.

Her son—her own Louis Aubert—looking far, far older than he had looked when he had gone away on that first Sunday of August, 1914, was before her . . .

"*Petite Mère!*" he cried, nay, shouted. And then she saw that he was indeed a living head, for, behind him, followed the familiar figure of the village omnibus driver, carrying a knapsack, and a tin hat.

When in the kitchen, and with his arms still round her, he asked, suddenly, "Who is this young lad?" and she answered, in a low, hesitating voice he scarcely knew as hers, "A namesake of yours, my son, who has no home, no friends, not even a memory left. Also he is blind. It is bad for any man, even if he is sightless, to be idle, so I am arranging for him to be employed in the pot-pourri branch of our business. The care of him is my thanksgiving to the good God for your return."

The Secession of Canton

By J. O. P. Bland

WHEN, at the invitation of the B.B.C., Mr. Vernon Bartlett, representative in London of the League of Nations Secretariat, sets forth to enlighten the British public with regard to the critical situation in Manchuria, it probably never occurs to him that the policies and opinions which he represents constitute one of the chief causes of that dangerous situation and of many others which, since the beginning of the century, have made China a land of increasing calamities and a source of danger to the world's peace. Yet such is undoubtedly the truth, for it is safe to assert that the Chinese would never have ventured to demand the annulment of their Treaty obligations in Manchuria and to indulge in a Press campaign of pin-pricks and provocation against Japan, had they not been encouraged in so doing by the belief that they could always rely upon the moral support of the League, and that, as regards Manchuria in particular, the sympathies of Geneva would be identical with those of Washington. Herein they have confidently relied, and with good cause, upon the conception of modern China which the Cantonese school of diplomacy and propaganda has skilfully impressed upon the Geneva mind, a conception so palpably irreconcilable with known facts, that it can deceive none but those who have no direct knowledge of Oriental peoples and those who wish to be deceived. Thus we have public opinion confronted, on the one hand, with the reality of a China laid waste by lawless soldiery and brigands, by flood and famine, civil strife and an official class which recognizes no laws but those of its own making, and on the other hand, by the League of Nations, solemnly accepting and promulgating the political aspirations of the Kuomintang delegates, together with their magnificent but wholly chimerical schemes for disarmament, opium abolition, public health services, improved communications, and whatnot.

What has now happened in Manchuria was bound to occur, sooner or later. The whole history of China's relations with European nations proves that whenever the latter have adopted a policy of patient conciliation, the result has always been to produce a state of affairs which eventually led to hostilities. It was the arrogance of the Cantonese, encouraged by such a policy, which made our first war with China inevitable. The present situation in Manchuria is directly ascribable to the fact that of late years we have encouraged China's rulers (dominated as regards their foreign relations by the Western-educated Cantonese) to regard us as so irretrievably pledged to this policy, that the most serious outrages against the person and property of foreigners may be committed with impunity. The League is now greatly concerned over this Manchurian situation, yet even in its anxiety to save its own face and the lath-and-plaster of the Kellogg pact, it continues to manifest its splendid aloofness from realities and the effectiveness of Kuomintang propaganda, by professing to regard China as a "great Power," capable of engaging, as such, in a war with Japan. Which is, of course, absurd.

It is not my present purpose to discuss the origins and probable results of the Manchurian conflict. I propose in this article to emphasize the importance, in this case as in all China's international relations, of the Cantonese element in Chinese politics, without a proper understanding of which, and of its bearing upon world economics in the near future, it is impossible to form a sound judgment on any aspect of Far Eastern affairs. But before leaving the subject of Manchuria it is permissible to observe how little attention has been given by the Press to the coincidence between the visit to Tokyo of the Canton Government's Foreign Minister, Eugene Chen, and the Japanese Government's sudden decision to take a strong line for the protection of its interests at Moukden. There is nothing remarkable in the fact that the Cantonese should intrigue with the Japanese

to injure the government at Nanking through its ally, the ruler of Manchuria, or that, having thus intrigued, they should propose to make common cause with Nanking against Japan, on condition that Chiang Kai-shek surrenders his dictatorship and pretensions to represent the Kuomintang. These manœuvres are all in keeping with the traditions of Canton's statecraft and calculated to promote its ambitions of achieving complete control of the machinery of government in China. The most remarkable feature of the situation is, that the League of Nations, professing to represent the collective political intelligence of Europe, should fail to recognize the significance of this coincidence and profess to regard Japan's punitive and retaliatory operations as acts committed by the Commander-in-Chief in Manchuria without authority and against the wishes of his Government. Which, again, is absurd.

Manchurian affairs, however, are merely one phase of the Chinese problem and it may safely be predicted that their solution will be found, either by Chang Hsueh-liang or his successor, along the usual line of least resistance, as was the case when Russia resorted to force in the matter of the Chinese Eastern Railway. But the manifest determination of the Cantonese to control the government and foreign relations of China is a very different matter. It constitutes a permanent factor of unrest and strife, the importance of which has so far not been recognized by publicists in this country and America. As a rule, they have been content to describe the revolt of the Kuang provinces against the rule of Nanking as merely a passing phase in the struggle for supremacy between continually changing factions, a manifestation of rivalries between political groups, which time and the hour may be expected to solve. But if we consider the latest declaration of Cantonese independence in the light of Chinese history (especially that of the last half century) it can hardly fail to be recognized as an event of very real significance, a sign and portent of things to come in the Far East,

which must seriously affect world politics in the near future.

It is, of course, no new thing that Canton should be a centre of revolutionary unrest and a source of political excursions and alarms; nor is there anything particularly remarkable in the record and attitudes of the secessionist leaders. The factors which, by their steadily increasing and cumulative effect, are investing the Cantonese movement with world-wide significance, have their origins deep-rooted in the past—those geographical, social and economic factors which have always differentiated the social structure and mentality of the people of these seaboard provinces from those of the great alluvial plain of Central China. Because of these factors, it took the Manchu conquerors half a century longer to establish their authority over these provinces than in the North, and had it not been for the assistance rendered by Gordon, Ward, and other foreign military officers, the dynasty would probably have met its end at the hands of the southern rebels fifty years sooner than it actually did. Even when the power and prestige of the Manchus were at their zenith, under the Emperors Kang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the ceaseless activities of the Cantonese secret societies were a constant source of disorder and unrest, a sharp thorn in the side of the dynasty. But since Sun Yat-sen's successful revolution (in reality a *coup de main*) inaugurated the present era of internecine strife, certain new conditions have manifested themselves more distinctly, certain new factors have come into play, which have placed the Cantonese (using the term in its widest sense) in a position of great advantage, and seem destined before long to make them not only the dominant power in China, but an economic force with which the Western world will have to reckon.

Strictly speaking, these new factors are not wholly new. They have been gradually and naturally evolved out of the direct contacts with Western influences,

established long ago by the adventurous initiative of the Cantonese, and more particularly since the beginning of the century, because of the rapid growth of their communities overseas, from which the Republican movement of 1912 derived its chief inspiration and support. They arise, in fact, out of the racial characteristics of these quick-witted southerners and particularly from their aptitude to adapt themselves readily to new conditions and new methods. The Kuang provinces to-day represent intellectual activities and financial resources, drawn from overseas, with which no other provincial combination can hope to compete. (Already, at the beginning of the century, the annual remittances of Chinese abroad were estimated by competent authority at over 15 millions sterling, and practically all these emigrants owe their first allegiance to Canton.)

In the course of a series of lectures delivered before the Lowell Institute at Harvard in 1912, I drew attention to the growing importance of the Cantonese party as a determinant force and factor in the future of China, and to the essential differences of temperament and tradition which distinguish its rank and file from the patient, passive people of the central and northern provinces. I pointed out that the original programme of the founders of the Republic (then in its second year) had always been identified with Cantonese initiative and that the leaders of the political groups at Peking and Nanking were already disposed to resent that initiative and to suspect that Sun Yat-sen's idea of a Republic meant "China for the Cantonese." In 1906–7, before the death of the great Empress Dowager, the predominant influence of a highly intelligent coterie of American-educated Cantonese, under the protection of the Viceroy Yuan, had permeated every department of the metropolitan administration, to the unconcealed chagrin of the Hunanese, Chihli, and Fukien placemen. Thus, even before the collapse of the dynasty, the clannish solidarity of the Cantonese, their genius for political organization and knowledge of foreign affairs,

had marked them out as a rapidly growing force of a new type, with which the older political factions were not in a position to cope.

Having had occasion to study on the spot the mentality of and methods of most of the progressive Cantonese leaders, I was then (and am still) of the opinion that, although genuine Republicanism is irreconcilable with the instincts and traditions of the Chinese race, it is possible to conceive the eventual establishment of a Republic, framed on American lines, for Kuangtung and Kuangsi; in other words, that, so far as these provinces are concerned, the visions of Sun Yat-sen are not beyond the farthest horizons of possibility. Finally, considering the indisputable and steadily increasing advantage which the Cantonese leaders enjoyed from the moral and financial support of their fellow-provincials overseas, I ventured the prophecy that "Canton will either succeed in dominating the internal politics of the Republic by virtue of its superior organization and knowledge of democratic institutions, or that it will insist upon conditions of provincial autonomy which will make an effective central government impossible."

The course of events, during the twenty years which have since elapsed, has fairly justified this prediction. The history of this period may be described as a ceaseless struggle for supremacy between continually changing groups of political adventurers, supported by purely mercenary bodies of armed men. Throughout this struggle the Cantonese have been conspicuous for vigorous initiative, cohesion and political acumen; the triumphant progress of the southern "Nationalist" forces through Central and Northern China in 1925–6 afforded very significant proof of their ability to adopt Western ideas, even those of Bolshevik Communism, for the furtherance of their military and political ambitions. As the birthplace of the Revolution of 1911 and the home of its prophet, Canton has always claimed to be the only orthodox expounder of Kuomintang policies and prin-

ciples of government, and whenever (as in the recent crisis, or that of 1916) it has failed to impose its nominees and its will upon the central government, it has promptly declared its independence and proceeded to establish a military government of its own in the City of Rams.

As matters stand, the combined forces opposed to Cantonese domination are probably stronger than they were in 1916, partly because of the increased importance of Manchuria as a factor of the situation, and partly because the lines of cleavage between north and south have been deepened by the aggressiveness of the Cantonese and by their readiness to enlist the aid of foreigners —Russians yesterday, Japanese to-day—in order to enforce their authority. There would therefore appear to be no immediate prospect that China as a whole will accept a central government in which the Cantonese would occupy the commanding position which they claim. On the other hand, the separatist tendencies which have always characterized the inhabitants of the Kuang provinces are stronger to-day than they were under the Manchus, partly because of the abolition of the civil service examinations (a very powerful element of cohesion) and partly because of the cumulative effect of American and other foreign influences incompatible with, and impatient of, the inert conservatism of the Chinese masses. Such being the case, it would seem inevitable that China south of the Yangtsze will eventually become a separate Republic, governed from Canton, whose shifting frontiers, alliances, and policies will continue, as at present, to be largely a matter of stratagems and spoils.

The clannishness of the Cantonese and their collective readiness to sacrifice the ideal of national unity to frankly provincial ambitions, has seldom been more clearly displayed than in the latest struggle between Chiang Kai-shek and the leaders of the Canton section of the Kuomintang. The immediate causes of this quarrel are immaterial; its ancient roots lie buried in the past. But

it is worthy of note that when, without process of law, General Chiang seized and detained the person of Hu Han-min, the Cantonese chairman of the Legislative Council, with the obvious intention of holding him as a hostage for the good behaviour of his political friends, the separatist movement which followed received the immediate support of all the important Cantonese politicians who had hitherto been identified with the Nanking Government, including the Chinese Minister at Washington (Dr. C. C. Wu), the Minister of Railways (Sun Fo), Wang Chung hui, the international jurist, and Tang Shao-yi, elder statesman and adviser to the Government. These men, be it observed, are all prominently associated in the public mind with the foundation of the Republic; they represent the fine flower of Western learning, and their proclaimed programme has always been the unification of China under a constitutional government. Nevertheless, when it comes to the pinch of party politics, of "Canton *versus* the Soong dynasty," they display a parochialism as inveterate as that of the Hunanese or Anhui Conservatives under the Monarchy, combined with an almost Irish quality of intransigeance. This last undoubtedly reflects their increasing consciousness of the advantages which Canton enjoys as the ancestral home, rallying centre and chief beneficiary of the wealthy communities overseas.

Whatever may be their effect upon the present struggle for predominance in China, the influence of these communities already constitutes a factor in Far Eastern affairs, far exceeding in its potential importance all the political programmes and problems of Nanking. As regards the nature and evolution of this factor, the world at large is generally unaware or forgetful of the significant fact, that the tide of Chinese emigration which in the middle of the nineteenth century began to flow towards the Straits Settlements, the Dutch Indies, Burmah, Indo-China, Siam and the Pacific coast, was from the outset practically confined to natives of the Kuang

provinces and Fukien, and that this monopoly has been jealously protected and skilfully directed ever since by their guilds and secret societies. Nor does the world realize how swiftly this silent-flowing tide has increased in range and volume since the passing of the American Exclusion Acts, towards the end of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, no comprehensive or authoritative statistics are available on the subject. The numbers of Chinese resident in the colonial territories or protectorates of the Western Powers and on the Pacific seaboard, can only be estimated, as a rule, from the census figures given from time to time in uncorrelated government reports; but from these, and from works such as M. Dennery's "Foules d'Asie," and Professor Toynbee's survey of "Chinese Immigration into Tropical Territories," certain general inferences may be drawn.

Chinese immigration into the United States, freely permitted by the Burlingame Treaty of 1868, was rigorously limited by agreement in 1883, and finally ended by the Asiatic Exclusion Law in 1904. After that date, the tide of emigration, checked in its eastward movement, flowed with rapidly increasing force towards Malaya, Siam, Indo-China, Burmah, and the Dutch Indies. The latest reliable statistics give the following results in each of these countries :—

British Malaya.—In 1921, the Chinese population (census return) amounted to 1,174,777, as against 1,651,051 Malays. The actual figure at the present day can only be estimated, but as the net immigration for the years 1925 to 1928 was over a million, the native population must have been in the minority for some time past.

Siam.—According to the census of 1920, there were 260,464 Chinese in Siam at that date. In 1925, the number was estimated at 500,000 (Ency. Brit.), and in 1930 at 2,000,000. The immigration recorded between 1918 and 1926 amounted to 643,000.

Indo-China.—In recent years Chinese immigration into Indo-China appears to have been discouraged and checked by the French authorities. In 1910, their number was officially given as 232,000. The latest estimates place it at about 370,000.

Burmah.—According to the census of 1901, there were then 62,486 Chinese resident in the Province; in 1911, the number was 123,000, and

in 1921, 149,060. They intermarry freely with Burmese women, and the male children of such marriages are held to be Chinese.

DUTCH EAST INDIES.—In 1900, the Java Bureau of Statistics gave the number of Chinese in Java, Sumatra, Borneo, etc., as 537,000. In 1920, it was 809,000, at which date the total European and Eurasian population amounted to 169,708.

The number of Chinese in British North Borneo in 1930 was estimated at 60,000.

The PHILIPPINES.—The number of "persons of Chinese parentage" was estimated in 1928 at about 150,000. These are mostly natives of Fukien.

The most significant feature presented by each and all of these Chinese communities overseas is the economic superiority which they display over the inhabitants of the countries in which they establish themselves. Given a fair field of opportunity, their racial solidarity, ready adaptability, sobriety and thrift, combined with a standard of living which defies all competition, enable them to underlive and undersell all other races; and the same qualities, combined with shrewd business ability, tend to concentrate wealth in the hands of their merchants, bankers and shipowners. The British Colonies of Hongkong and Singapore are virtually Chinese-owned to-day; were it not for the Asiatic Exclusion Acts, the Pacific coast of North America would have become a Chinese colony long ago. Where once these sons of Han have taken root, nothing short of physical violence (such as California resorted to in 1904, and the Koreans have used quite lately) can save the native lord of the soil from being "ruined by Chinese cheap labour," and dispossessed. Moreover, so long as there is a right of entry and a living to be made, every Chinese community will draw unto itself masses of new recruits from the overcrowded homeland. It requires therefore no special gift of imagination to foresee that, either the nations concerned will protect themselves in the near future by legislating against Chinese immigation, or that within a comparatively short space of time (say, fifty years) Canton will have become the capital city and spiritual

home of a New China, whose commercial and political activities will be the predominating factor of the whole Pacific region. As time goes on, as this Cantonese centre becomes more and more representative of the emancipated modernity of the communities overseas, it is certain that its social and political structure must become more and more sharply differentiated from that of the rest of China. At the same time, because the modification of racial characteristics is necessarily a slow process of evolution, it is safe to assume that the power of the secret societies, wielded by an inner directorate with its headquarters at Canton, will not be greatly different, in its machinery and methods, from that of former days, and that the Cantonese Kuomintang will continue to command the allegiance, collect the subscriptions, and control the international relations of these communities overseas; in other words, that it will exercise immense power over a very wide area. The recent proscription of the activities of the Kuomintang by the British authorities of Malaya may be regarded as a cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, which is destined eventually to overshadow all other problems of the Far East. Regarded in this light, the significance of Canton's latest declaration of independence lies more in the future than in the present; but its ultimate importance is something which transcends all the permutations and combinations of Kuomintang, or other party, politics.

One Thing and Another

By J. B. Morton

(*Being further extracts from the diary kept by Mr. Charles Fiddington.*)

September 23rd.—I very much doubt whether any other nation could have shown such grit and maintained such a solid front in a critical hour as we have done, and without boasting about it, too. Equality of sacrifice is already a *fait accompli*, and every political party, in friendly rivalry, is determined to be the first party to get the credit for thinking of the nation first. Heaven knows what splendid sacrifices our chosen leaders are daily making in secret. But one thing emerges from the chaos of rumour and alarm—it is our duty to trust these men blindfold, if need be. This is not the hour to demand a programme or to extract a promise. If we cannot give *carte blanche* to those whom we ourselves elect as our representatives, then where are we to look for guidance? Nor ought we to expect those who are harassed with the cares of office to open their minds to us. They are the experts. Were they to share their secrets with us, we might misunderstand their motives.* So let Trust† be the word; let us show our confidence in the selfless patriots who are thinking only of our good, by giving them a people's heartfelt mandate to do whatever they damned well please.

September 24th.—I have been rather alarmed at the bill from my daughter's school‡ for last term. Some change seems to be coming over our educational establishments. The fees for tuition are quite reasonable, but it is impossible to find out what she is being taught, as the major part of her time (and my money) appears to be spent in physical exercises and other odds and ends of

* That's quite possible.

† See a really rousing article called "Say Trust!" in the "Happy New Year," by the Dean of Pietermaritzburg.

‡ St. Ursula's, Whitingbury—a beastly school, if ever there was one.

various kinds. There is an item of £10 for a subscription to a Field-Psychology Club, which seems exorbitant. Then I notice that two of the Latin hours have been given up to Dairy Science, and that Botanical Research has been substituted for Mathematics. One hour a week is still devoted to English Literature, but I am not sure I approve of the chosen book for this term; it is one of Mr. Theodore Dreiser's. Apparently my daughter is compelled to subscribe to two magazines devoted to Physical Culture, and to a Rambling Society. And why should I pay for lectures on modern dancing?*

September 26th.—A shameless cynic at my club says that if the party leaders were sportsmen they would toss up over this election business, to decide who should have first pick. Sides could then be chosen amicably, as on the cricket or football field. One cannot help laughing, even though, of course, we all know that this is no time to make fun of politics. I really don't know, indeed, what this man holds sacred. He showed me a sentence from a criticism of what he called "another of those crazy, obscene and blasphemous D. H. Lawrence books." The criticism said the book was "a symbolic declaration of that understanding of life, of the interdependent rhythm of body and soul towards which Lawrence had groped so impressively."† He roared with laughter at this, I don't know why.

September 29th.—It seems to me to be a miserable shame that the League of Nations, which has just had such a signal triumph in the Manchurian affair, when the Japanese troops occupied Mukden, should be so hard up for money. Surely this last victory ought to persuade the defaulters to send in their subscriptions at once.‡

September 30th.—I should so much have liked to be present at the recent meeting between Mr. Gandhi and

* Because from these lectures she will learn a great deal of the habits and customs of the duskier peoples of our great Empire.

† Miss Edith Shackleton.

‡ Luxemburg has just sent a fiver, with compliments.

Mr. Chaplin; what Mr. Kipling called East and West. The public, with that infallible instinct of theirs for the fitness of things, cheered both men to the echo.* Who knows but that they may have foreseen great consequences, and perhaps a solution to our present-day problems. At any rate, I do not think it is fantastic to see in Mr. Chaplin a kind of unofficial ambassador to those whom Mr. Gandhi represents, an intermediary, let us say. One is only sorry that other work of international importance prevented Mr. Duleepsinghi and Miss Amy Johnson from being present at the meeting.

And now that Mr. Gandhi has been acclaimed in Lancashire, through which he made a triumphal progress, is it too much to hope that Mr. Chaplin may find time, in between his social engagements, to return the compliment by going to India, and putting his point of view before the malcontents? Only in this manner can nations be brought closer to each other, and the bonds of love and mutual understanding be strengthened, until the way is paved for that universal brotherhood which is the aim of every enlightened citizen to whom our glorious heritage has descended.† A mahatma and a film-comedian have perhaps laid the first stone of that building which is destined to grow into the Palace of Universal Man.‡

October 1st.—The cynic at my club said yesterday, "I am so sorry for the New Party." When I asked him why, he replied, "It seems to be the only party that has not been able to get into the jumble or coalition which humorists call the National Government. You see, when the situation gets worse, nobody will be able to blame any single party, because of this lumping together, and so, later on, when it's all blown over, and we are all engrossed in the Cup Tie, each of the parties will be able

* A sporting touch, which I recommend to the notice of the decadent Latin nations.

† And so on.

‡ As they say in the jug and bottle department.

to appear with a clean slate. The words National Government will be made to cover a multitude of sins."

I told him I thought the National Government had done its work exceedingly well, and that, anyhow, everybody ought to support it in its aims. He asked me what its aims were. I said, "That is its own business."

October 2nd.—The British Association 1931 Omnibus is full of good reading for all those who are interested in the progress of Science. A casual glance through it teaches us that the earth is expanding at the rate of a cubic mile in fourteen thousand years, and shrinking rather more rapidly; that buttons are used only by homo sapiens; that the sun is both gaining and losing weight; that the world is something between 150 million and 30 million years old; that goats can be inoculated against poisoning by ivy; that the raising of the hat is a sign of greeting; that evolution is finished, and that it has not yet really begun; and that glass is no good as a lightning conductor.

October 4th.—A friend of mine who is in the know tells me that a General Election has been settled on, and that each party will go to the country with a formula and a manifesto. Personally, I am glad. A General Election will help to clear the air, and to show us where we stand, and there is nothing like a manifesto to restore confidence. I went in to see Mrs. Selverson* this afternoon, and she was most excited about the whole thing. "What I love," she said, "about a General Election, is standing outside one of the big shops, and waiting for the figures to be announced. The suspense is awful,† and it is such fun making bets on the result.‡ We always make up quite a big party, and then go along in various cars to some place where the results are announced. Cyril takes sandwiches and drinks, and we make a regular

* She married (*en vingt-et-uneièmes noces*) Mr. Rigby Selverson, the jute Napoleon.

† Last time she had hysterics while waiting for the Runcorn result.

‡ She cleared seventeen shillings in ten minutes.

night of it, and it's such fun guessing whether the man at the top of the poll is a Liberal, Labour or Conservative, before you look at the letters after the name."

And then people say that nobody takes an intelligent interest in elections! By the way, I hear that an enterprising publisher has made an offer for an omnibus volume of election manifestos, with an introduction, specially written, by Mr. Billy Bennett. It ought to sell like hot cakes, because the public is only too anxious to know what is going on.

October 6th.—I hear that various attempts were made to stop the public presentation of "Salome" last night. It was suggested in some quarters that the famous head on the charger would be replaced by a foot, that being less gruesome. Another idea was that the piece should be played in Russian, so that the audience might miss some of the more daring lines. Again, it is well known that Mrs. Badger, who is "Pesterer"* of the "Lady's Fireside," made a strong plea for decency by suggesting that the dance of the Seven Veils should become the dance of the Seven Thick Travelling Rugs.

But all this was in vain. The play was produced, and "ugly vice reared its head unchecked," as a dramatic critic put it.

October 7th.—The problem of the empty churches continues to exercise the minds of Anglican clergymen. The latest device for filling a church comes from a Staffordshire vicar who announced that Mr. Charles Chaplin would read the lessons on the following Sunday. The church was packed, but after the collection, the congregation, with one voice, asked for its money back, having realized that the whole thing was a "plant." The vicar's church will be emptier than ever henceforth. The clergyman who attracted worshippers by dressing the choir as footballers, and blowing a whistle every now and then, and erecting goal-posts over the pulpit, found

* She is also Terpsichore of the "Afternoon Tea," and Aunt Towser of the "Tra-la-la."

that those of his congregation who were not interested in football grew tired of all this. He then tried cricket-symbolism, but with less success.*

October 8th.—Everyone is talking of the superb march of the Scots Guards from Aldershot to Windsor—the Economy March. As the *Evening Standard* said: "They could have been sitting comfortably in the train on this journey from Aldershot to Windsor, but they decided to do a bit more than their bit in the national economy campaign, and to march to Windsor, to save the expense to the country of the railway fares. . . On the parade ground men of other battalions stopped their work to cheer their comrades." There has been nothing like this since the retreat from Corunna. They sang "We're happy when we're hiking," the new song-hit, as they ate up the road. "We don't mind the damp weather," said a hard-bitten sergeant-major, with twelve rows of cycling medals on his chest. One of the officers is reported to have said, "The march is comparatively easy to such well-trained men." Ah! What modesty! I read, too, that the idea originated in the mind of a Colonel "who is a close student of the economic situation, and who realizes the urgent need for all-round economies."† I understand that, in order to save still more money, the whole battalion has joined the Nudist League, and will require no uniforms for the future. If only everybody would go on like this, the cost of living would soon go down.

October 11th.—It is surely time the Licensing Commission presented its Report. If all one hears is true, that long-awaited document will not be devoid of thrills. The members of the Commission have not been idle, and they may be relied upon to make our blood creep

* The verger lost the bails just before the 11 o'clock service, and the choir-women refused to wear cricket caps.

† It is said that the Colonel sat up all night making calculations, and finally came to the conclusion that it would be cheaper to walk than to take the train. A firm of chartered accountants examined his figures, and supported his contention.

with tales of public-house debauchery. A particularly sharp watch, it is said, has been kept on dart-players,* who, after they have drunk more than is good for them, frequently damage the walls of the bar-parlour by aiming wildly, and missing the board altogether. As evidence of intemperate habits, various tankards, glasses and jugs have been bought by members, and will no doubt be produced as evidence after the publication of the Report.

October 17th.—I bought the new paper *Action* to-day, in which it is explained that the movement of which it is the organ is going to "Cut like a sword through the knot of the past to the winning of the modern State." Nothing could be clearer than that, and I am sure all the young girls and boys who have always wanted to cut like swords through the knots of the past, will dash in and make the modern State. As a statement of policy this challenges comparison with the thirty-four manifestos of the various party leaders. It is concise, lucid and realistic—or, as a young lady friend of mine put it, "I think it is a perfectly gorgeous idea." Another admirable article in the same paper says: "We believe that this country must abandon the old shibbolethst and face the future with eyes confident in some new message." What could be fairer than that? Or more startlingly original? Further on I find a disquieting note: "Sacrifices for the rich there will have to be." This smacks rather of an attempt to play the same trick with our whiskey as was played the other day with the beer of the poor; or even to tax luxury motors. I see no need for that kind of hitting below the belt. Equality of sacrifice is all right up to a point. But it can be infernally inconvenient, if pressed to its logical conclusion.

* Science has recently discovered that the dart-player is a special type of degenerate. The game is rarely played among old public-school men, or in the best clubs.

† And what about the "outworn dogmas"?

The Five Year Plan: Success or Failure?

By Viscount Brentford & Pembroke Wicks

WE have already referred to the lack of railway facilities and the shortage of coal as fundamental defects in the Five Year Plan. The lack of skilled workers is a still more serious difficulty. So long as Russia is able to rely on American capital, American engineers and American foremen and leading hands to build her factories and start them working, matters may go smoothly. There may be an illusory appearance of successful planning, based entirely on capitalist skill, energy and finance. But the supply of Russian specialists—be they engineers, technical foremen or skilled hands—is hopelessly inadequate for the rapid expansion in industry that is postulated. There is a great display of activity in technical classes, the dispatch of picked men to America for instruction and similar expedients, but as we know well enough in this country you cannot manufacture experience, or apply mass production methods to technical education. The training of an army of skilled workmen, sufficient in number to staff the Russian factories in all the various branches of industry, is the work of a generation in the most favourable conditions. Some idea of the technical staff required may be gathered from the fact that the Plan provides for a capital investment of over a thousand million sterling.

In the Coal Combine, for example, there are eleven separate trusts, each with its own group of mines. The State Machinery Combine is responsible for the manufacture of machinery and equipment of every description, from railway cars to sewing machines. The two Steel Combines control 14 separate undertakings, including 8 new steel works with modern plant. The largest, Magnetogorsk, already mentioned, will alone require a larger technical staff than any steel works in this

country. The Textile industry covers 183 factories. It will need specialists in all the complicated processes for the manufacture of cotton, wool and silk. So also with other industries—chemicals, electrical apparatus, non-ferrous metals and so forth throughout the whole range of manufacture. Skilled hands for this vast expansion of industry do not exist in Russia. For example, in 1929, when the execution of the Plan was on its initial stage, 44 per cent. of the important posts requiring the highest technical qualifications were occupied by persons without specialized technical education, with an even higher percentage, 60 per cent., in the case of posts for which a secondary technical education was required. In the autumn of 1930 the total number of specialists in Russia, including civil engineers, technical experts and skilled hands was under 300,000. The total number required by the Plan is calculated at more than four times that number. In such circumstances it is not surprising that quality of output is unusually poor—except in those cases where manufacture is under the personal supervision of American and German engineers. (There are, for example, nearly 400 Americans at work in the Stalingrad tractor factory.)

The shortage of skilled workers was one of the main reasons which compelled Stalin last June to announce a new labour policy. In future payment will be by results. The wages of skilled workmen are being increased considerably above those of unskilled, in defiance of the Communist doctrine of the equality of labour. Special inducements are being offered for increased output, in the form of premiums and other privileges, and vigorous propaganda is being carried on to encourage workers to vie with one another to increase production.

There is one point which we must not overlook—that all labour in Russia is not slave-driven. There is no doubt that a vast number of the younger men and women are working for the plan with the greatest enthusiasm. They have killed the old religion of the country, and in

its place have elevated Leninism into something almost divine. This and the possible effect on the progress of the Plan must not be forgotten. For it would be a mistake to suppose that the Russians will achieve nothing by their efforts. They may achieve a great deal—but only by an extravagant waste of effort and the continuing misery of the people. The factories planned are undoubtedly being built, under foreign capitalist supervision. They are being put into operation as soon as practicable after completion. The goods they manufacture will be at the disposal of the Russian Government for home consumption or for export, as the financial obligations of Russia may require. That goods are badly wanted at home will not prevent their export if the Russian Government is in need of foreign currency. This has happened frequently in the past in the case of foodstuffs and other primary commodities—for example butter and eggs.* The Soviet Government will not be deterred from exporting manufactured goods merely because the Russian people are in urgent need of them.

Moreover, it is on the cards that when the Russian factories begin to produce they will turn out thousands of tons of material for which the Soviet Government has no immediate use. The new undertakings cannot be allowed to remain idle, so long as there are workmen to be employed and raw material available to keep them occupied. The Soviet Authorities have called for such cruel sacrifices from the Russian people in order to make possible the financing of the Five Year Plan that they dare not run the risk of disillusioning them. It is conceivable, for example, that if those in control of Magnetogorsk succeed in collecting enough coal to keep some of the furnaces at work they will turn out thousands of tons of steel rails and that there will be no railway engineers to lay them, or large quantities of boiler plate and that there will be no skilled hands to convert them into boilers and locomotives.

* (*Statisticheskoe Obezrenie*, 1929, No. 111, p. 75. *Isvestia*, October 21, 1930.)

We may yet see steel rails being offered on our North-East Coast below the price of scrap-iron. If the Russians succeed in turning out masses of manufactured or semi-manufactured material for which they have no immediate use, their financial straits are such that they will certainly export all their railways can carry and sell it abroad at any price they can obtain. It is in this direction that in our opinion lies the chief danger to European trade.

Not only are prices fixed at any level that will obtain a market, often regardless of cost, but the standard of living and conditions of labour are far inferior to those of any European country. A mere comparison of wage rates, taking the rouble at the nominal par value of 9 roubles 40 kopecks to the £,* while showing a much lower rate of wages than in this country, is in fact useless as a guide. The purchasing power of the pound is and has been for many years worth far more than 9 roubles 40 kopecks. What the real value of the rouble is no man can say—since the export of roubles is forbidden and there is no international exchange. Still less can we make any exact estimate from the cost of the commodities to the inhabitants of Russia. Some commodities which we should regard as essential are unobtainable—others workmen can buy in limited quantities at the State Co-operative Stores at prices artificially fixed by the Government, while any excess above the prescribed allowance and any articles not stocked by the Co-operative Stores have to be purchased in the free market at prices so exorbitant as to bewilder anyone not conversant with the topsy-turvy conditions in Russia. Thus the American journalist, Mr. Knickerbocker, in his recent book on the Five Year Plan† gives the following example: Butter—11 roubles a pound (£1 2s. 6d. at the nominal rate of exchange); ten eggs for 3 roubles (about 6s. 4d.);

* Before the abandonment of the gold standard in this country.

† We are indebted to this interesting work for many of the details of the working of the Plan given in this article.

6 roubles for a pound of tough meat (about 12s. 8d.) and so forth. The paper rouble is held by the population to be worth many times less than its equivalent in copper coins. The Government have at various times further debased its value by new issues of paper currency without any backing in gold or commodities. By this means they have so debased the purchasing value of wages that they are obtaining labour at a far cheaper rate —expressed in terms of commodities—than the workmen of any other European country. Nor is this all. The Government control supplies and are able to fix prices in the State Co-operative Stores at any figure they please; in other words, the Government, the sole employers of labour, are able to regulate the purchasing power of the wages they pay. They can debase the real value of wages to any extent they choose.

In addition to this, the despotic control exercised over the people by the Secret Police and the State Labour Departments amounts in effect to a power of compulsion over labour that is indistinguishable in practice from conscription. The often cited decree of the People's Commissariat of Labour published in *Izvestia* on November 5, 1930 enables the Labour Bureau to compel a workman to take any kind of work offered, at any place, and in any conditions, the alternative being what is known as "mass physical labour," viz., heavy work in the timber industry, the coal mines or navvy work. Should that be refused, the workman is removed from the employment register, and as it is only by being on that register that he is entitled to buy food at the State food stores, which have a virtual monopoly of supplies, he is faced with starvation. Consequently the State officials have in theory absolute control over the workmen. In practice, however, owing to the general shortage of commodities of all kinds, the Soviet authorities, in spite of their terrorist methods, have great difficulty in preventing the continual movement of large numbers of the people from one district to another in search of better

living conditions. The supply of labour is seriously disorganized in consequence. This is especially so in the coal mines and the timber industry—in which the conditions are so arduous as to be shirked by all who can escape them.

The Government have acquired another source of cheap labour by the use of criminal and political prisoners in certain industries. It is now notorious that large numbers are employed in the timber industry—often in revolting conditions, but it is not generally appreciated in this country that compulsory labour is the punishment usually inflicted by the Courts under the Correctional Labour Code for offences of all kinds. Nor are punishments of this kind restricted to labour in prisons and detention camps. A man may be sentenced to compulsory labour "without detention under guard," which means that he is obliged to carry out the work specified either in his own home or at a specified labour centre or even in the factory where he is usually employed. In the last case only does he receive any wages—the rate fixed being 50 per cent. of the normal minimum wage for that class of work. In 1929, 350,000 persons were sentenced to compulsory labour without detention. It follows that the Soviet Officials have at their disposal a large supply of forced labour, either paid nothing at all, or half the low rate of wages prevailing in Russia. Further, whole villages are virtually conscripted as occasion requires for seasonal work, by the fiction of a resolution passed—albeit under the surveillance of the Secret Police—at a village meeting, by which the village decides that all its inhabitants, including those not present at the meeting, shall "voluntarily undertake self-imposed labour." Refusal by any villager to do the work decreed by the village assembly is punishable under Article 61 of the Criminal Code.

In consequence of these peculiar conditions, no matter how extravagant the execution of the Five Year Plan, the actual labour costs in the factories in operation must be

at much lower rates than those of Russia's industrial competitors in other countries. If to this be added the fact that neither rent nor interest on borrowed capital have to be paid, the unfairness of Russian competition is manifest. Any costings comparison, however, will frequently be useless, in view of the commercial policy perforce adopted by the Soviet Export Trade Department, whenever it is necessary to provide foreign credits. As there are practically no "Invisible exports" and no rouble exchange, imports from America and elsewhere have to be paid for in goods. Hitherto payment has been mostly in primary commodities, oil, wheat, timber, etc., the principal market being Great Britain.

If foreign credits are urgently required to pay for foreign purchases, the Soviet Government have no alternative but to order the Export Department to realize their stocks abroad at any price they will fetch, regardless of cost and profit. If the transactions are large enough in volume the effect will be to break the market in the commodity selected. For example, last year orders were issued to the various selling agents in this country to realize stocks at any sacrifice in order to provide funds to meet the heavy commitments falling due to America and Germany. Last September Russian soap was being sold in this country at £20 to £30 a ton, when the market price was £43. Russian wheat was offered in October 1930 at 24s. to 26s. a quarter, and Canadian wheat fell in consequence to 28s. This autumn Russian wheat afloat has been offered on the London Baltic Exchange as low as 15s. 6d. a quarter.* The same report notes that "heavy Russian clearances prevented any expansion of demand." Similar considerations will arise in respect of any commodity, manufactured or semi-manufactured, which the Export Department of the Soviet Government decides to throw on the market.

The credits granted by foreign firms to the Soviet Government when executing orders for purchases under

* *The Times*, September 11, 1931, Market Report.

the Five Year Plan will mature at intervals—some of them not for several years. It follows that whenever this foreign indebtedness falls due, the products of the new Russian factories may be thrown suddenly on the world market in order to enable Russia to meet her financial obligations (if she does not once again repudiate her debts). The Russian people are in a state of semi-starvation. There is severe shortage of many essential commodities. It is obvious that the Export Trade Department, who have the monopoly of foreign trade, will select manufactured or semi-manufactured goods for export, whenever they are obtainable, in preference to foodstuffs. Indeed they have already declared this intention.* What classes of goods may be selected for export and what industries in this country may be affected it is impossible to say without more detailed information of Russian industrial production than has yet been disclosed to the outside world. In view of the shortage of skilled labour we need scarcely expect serious competition in articles requiring a high degree of personal skill in their manufacture—but severe competition may have to be met from goods that can be produced by mass production methods from raw material available in Russia. Labour is so cheap in Russia that the fact that a large proportion of the output will be rejected as faulty need not prevent an ample margin being available for export.

It is not easy to draw precise conclusions from the above brief survey of the Five Year Plan. It appears fairly clear, however, that the results will not come anywhere near the expectations of its authors, and that the present chaotic condition, with the general shortage of commodities accompanying it, may continue indefinitely —with this difference, that the results of Russian experiments in industrial manufacture will be thrown upon the already overcrowded markets of Europe.

That the Russian people will revolt against the

* M. Ravinovitch, Head of the Export Dept., in "Economicheskaya Jizn," September 17, 1930.

tyranny that has been imposed upon them we do not believe. The immense size of the country is in itself an obstacle to a general rising; while the elaborate system of espionage and the terrorist methods adopted by the Government would be effective to stifle any local outbreak at the outset. According to recent reports* the economic outlook is not promising. The peasantry in the collective farms, unable to obtain the manufactured goods they require, particularly textiles, boots, nails and soap, feel that the towns are not fulfilling their part of the bargain. In consequence there is great reluctance to surrender their grain to the collecting agents of the Soviet Government. It is too early to say whether this insubordination to the central authority is likely to prove serious; but it is significant that the Supreme Economic Council in Moscow have thought it necessary to order the urgent dispatch to grain districts of the maximum amount available of the commodities the peasants are demanding. It is indeed possible that the Plan may prove so unwieldy in operation that the whole economic machine will break down, that some districts will be unable to obtain the bare necessities of life, and that we may see a repetition of the famine years 1920 and 1921. In that event anything may happen.

Again, however, we must enter a caveat. The chances of revolt in a modern world are very slight if the man at the top keeps his nerve and shoots when the moment comes. No one can suggest lack of nerve on the part of the present rulers of Russia, and they have all the machine guns, artillery and gas at their disposal. On the other side there is as yet no sign of any Napoleon.

In the meantime it is not unreasonable to ask why the rest of the civilized world should tolerate the disturbance of their trade and the undermining of their standards of living in consequence of Russia's hysterical efforts to make the Five Year Plan a success. Some countries have indeed gone so far as to assist in this wild experiment

* *The Times*, September, 1931.

—the United States and Germany by giving technical assistance—Great Britain by guaranteeing traders who wish to sell to Russia. It is indeed a matter for amazement that the leading capitalist countries of the world should have gone out of their way to assist in a scheme the ultimate object of which is to destroy capitalism for ever. One is tempted to wonder whether the great American firms who have undertaken contracts amounting to many millions sterling have done so with tongue in cheek, knowing that however well they may execute their work, once American technical help is withdrawn, the Russians themselves will be unable to administer the vast undertakings that are being built up. Be that as it may, is it not time for the nations of Europe to call a halt, and by international agreement to close their markets to Russian goods, until Russia shows a disposition on the one hand to conform to the ordinary rules of international conduct and on the other hand to set up labour conditions at least comparable to those existing in the rest of Europe?

Finally, it must never be forgotten that the settled policy of the Russian Communists is the greatest menace to civilization since the Great War. They have invented a form of government hitherto unknown—all the more terrible in its power through its numbers to exert tyrannical authority in every part of the country. The 1½ million Communists dominate the population of 150 millions and membership of the party is rigidly restricted to those who can give proof of their acceptance of Communist doctrines. The ultimate aim of the Communist Party in Russia is to subject the whole world to tyrannical rule in the supposed interests of the working class in each country. The original objective—world revolution—remains unchanged. The Communists, through their despotic control of 150 millions of their fellow-countrymen, seek to impose their will upon the whole world—if need be by force of arms—when, as they hope, the Five Year Plan and the latest project—the

Fifteen Year Plan—have enabled Russia to equip herself with the armament for a great campaign. They look forward to millions of Russian Communists marching West over Europe to carry the blessings of Communism throughout the world. It will be said that so insolent an ambition is foredoomed to failure. That may be so, but the steps which Soviet Russia has taken to carry out her policy have already been a cause of intense irritation in many countries. For twelve years revolutionary propaganda and intrigue have been the weapons of Bolshevist Russia the world over, sometimes—as in China—with appalling results. We ourselves are shortly to feel the effects of her industrial policy, which in itself is planned as another rung in the ladder leading to world revolution.

We have deliberately avoided reference to the policy of the British Government during the last three years, in order that the Russian problem might be presented in an atmosphere as detached as possible from our own party politics. But in conclusion we must express our conviction that any patriotic British subject who takes the trouble to study the ambitions and methods of Soviet Russia to-day in their bearing upon the future of this country can come to one conclusion. It is essential for our safety that we should have a Government strong enough to pronounce the sentence of outlawry on Russia—so far as this country is concerned—and to invite the other nations of the world to combine and adopt whatever economic pressure may be necessary to put an end to her abominable courses.

[The first part of this contribution appeared in the October issue of THE ENGLISH REVIEW.]

Parodies: No. 2

By Hugh Kingsmill

Remarks by Dr. Johnson on Certain Writers of the Present Age. *Collected by J–m–s B–sw–ll Esquire.*

A VERY erroneous notion has been encouraged, alike by persons eager to exhibit the great Samuel Johnson as the victim of illiberal prepossessions, and by others who wish to claim his exalted authority for their own contracted views, that he was an enemy without discrimination to all the writers of the present age. Let those who have extended a heedless welcome to this notion reflect on the gross absurdity of supposing a man of Johnson's nice judgement and unvarying candour to be capable of including the enthusiastick, but truly innocent and pious Mr. Chesterton, and the polite and ingenious Mr. Galsworthy (against whom malice itself can urge no severer reproach than that his writings are too seldom illumined by the light of revealed religion) in the same condemnation with those odious wretches whose indecent ravings, issuing from the stews of the Gallic capital, are even in this licentious age forbidden ingress to our shores. Yet, since it is in the character of the human mind to be more firmly persuaded by authentick details than by general considerations, it is with high satisfaction that I now adduce in support of my friend's liberality of judgement the evidence of his own written and spoken words.

The circumstances which furnished me with the communication I am now to exhibit may be briefly reviewed. A young gentleman of my acquaintance, being desirous of commencing author, was advised by his mother, a lady who united exalted rank with an uncommon regard for wit and learning, to consult with me on the writers of the present times most proper to select as models for imitation. In my zeal to serve my youthful friend, and without the least apprehension that an unfavourable construction could be placed on my

application, I at once wrote to Johnson, soliciting in the most respectful terms the favour of his remarks on this topick. I do not think it necessary to give his reply, which quite confounded me with its extraordinary warmth, and in which he charged me with using the young man as a cover for my own curiosity. Yet, while I repel its immediate reference, I cannot forbear to transcribe one sentence, for its vigour and admirable expression. "He who plays the politician with his friends (Johnson wrote) will find himself at last in a despised and unpitied solitude."

Conscious that my intentions had not been improper, I wrote again, defending myself against his suspicions of me, and expatiating with sincere anxiety on the dangers which threatened my young friend in his perambulation of the modern maze, were he denied the wise and pious direction of Dr. Johnson.

To this appeal, my venerable friend replied immediately, in a letter which needed only to be completed to answer my highest expectations. I omit the first paragraph, in which I perceived with distress that the fumes of mistrust still lingered.

". . . Yet would I not (Johnson wrote) wittingly evade any duty, which I believed myself competent to discharge. In the supposition, therefore, that you report aright your friend's anxiety for my direction, I subjoin the following observations on the writers whom you particularly mention. The comprehensive survey of modern letters which you solicit, I have not the knowledge, nor, had I the knowledge, would I have the strength to supply. I am much out of health of late; and must pay for watchful nights with a lethargick stupour by day. All exertion has become hateful to me; nor shall I easily be persuaded that your friend has derived a benefit from this communication proportioned to the pains with which I write it.

"My observations follow the order of your enquiries. Let not your friend be seduced by the present extended

fame of Bernard Shaw. Shaw was much talked of before he was read, and he who owes his renown to curiosity will forfeit it when curiosity is satiated. Shaw's notions startle the vulgar, but do not persuade the wise. To rail at the order of society may solicit the attention of the idle, or kindle in weak minds a hope of changes, to be effected they know not by whom, and to comprise advantages, which wisdom knows to be unattainable, and which virtue would reject, could they be attained. The credulous, the greedy, and the licentious may welcome in the exclaimer against the unequal distribution of wealth, or the restrictions of the domestick system, a benefactor of mankind. But he who has learned to measure the imperfections of our present state will attend no other improvement of his lot than what he can himself effect, by disciplining desire and abating expectation. He will reserve his praises for those who furnish in their own lives an example of the degree to which passion may be subdued by reason, and interest by benevolence. He will repel with disgust the claim laid to our wonder and gratitude by persons who are too busy with schemes of reforming others to reform themselves.

" Yet, in condemning the general position of Shaw, I must not forget what is to be said in his extenuation. The laxity of his notions finds no counterpart in his practice. Shaw is a discreet and decent liver, who perceives without sharing the passions of ordinary men. His doctrine is licentious only because his desires are weak. The mildness of his disposition persuades him that passion would flow calmly, were it permitted to flow unconfined; and that the disorders of society proceed, not from natural depravity, but from an impatient disgust with restraints, which he rejects for others because they are not needed by himself. With this disgust, he swells out the prefaces annexed to his plays; here clamorously demanding that the accumulations of the prudent shall be opened to the spoliation of the needy,

there railing at the grossness of the marriage bed, and exalting the couch of occasion and caprice. But Shaw's frenzy is of the mind alone. His notions are vehement, his feelings are cool. To the characters in his plays he cannot impart what he lacks himself: they have nothing of passion, and little of life. Among his lesser personages, some may be found who are despicable and others who are imbecile; but the principals neither excite horror by depravity nor raise admiration by heroic excellence. They have little to perform, and perform that little with the languor of amiability. When they are merry, it is with their author's wit; when they contend, we are privy to Shaw disputing with himself. It is a strong proof of Shaw's distance from passion, that he is unwilling to image in his plays the crimes which he denounces in his prefaces. Who that credits the observations annexed to The Doctor's Dilemma would not choose the services of a hangman before those of a physician? Who that reads the play would not exchange for a couch of sickness cheered by such physicians the unfeeling commerce of real existence? Nay, even those crimes which Shaw applauds in the study, he will not exhibit on the stage. The wife in Candida reconciles inclination and decency by preferring her husband to her lover.

"Of Wells, the next name in your enquiry, I have read little; and that little I have not liked. The heroes of his fictions are disgusted with society, but society was first disgusted with them. They have much lust, and little learning; yet seek neither to abate their desires, nor to supply the deficiencies of their knowledge. The contempt which they provoke in others they retort with the malignity of impotence; their existence is an alternation of gross pleasures and uneasy repinings; and they are happy only in the imagination of novel societies, where ignorance shall be rewarded with power, and the reproach of vice be lost in the extermination of virtue.

"My asthma is very afflictive. The posture of writing is not agreeable to it, and I must seek relief in terminating

a letter, which in my present state I had been wiser not to begin. What I had to say of Chesterton and Belloc must wait for a more favourable hour. Persuade your friend to their perusal. He will discover in them what the young will not easily believe to exist, an union of wit and piety. But let him not run back with Chesterton and Belloc to the middle age, to find among barbarians the perfect model of government. If the young man's political notions are unsettled I would have him read the Dean of St. Paul's, who will teach him the duty of submission to constituted authority. I speak of political authority, I speak not of ecclesiastical nor theological. There is a strange laxity in the Dean in regard both to the discipline and the doctrine of the Church. He distresses me greatly. It is an ill example, and has too much an air of wantonness, when a dignitary of the Church searches the heathen philosophers for arguments to reconcile him to the Christian faith. I can write no more.

I am, dear Sir, your most humble servant,
SAM. JOHNSON."

I had not long received this letter, when a sudden call of business obliged me to go to London, whither I set out with much uneasiness, my wife having been very low over some weeks with an internal disorder. I arrived on Saturday, December 17th, and next morning visited Johnson, whom I found sitting at his tea. He looked pale, and had a difficulty with his breathing; but received me very civilly, and was soon conversing in his customary forceful and animated style. I thanked him very warmly for the valuable communication with which he had favoured me, and expressed my regrets that I should have troubled him at so unseasonable a moment. Johnson: "Your regrets had been stronger had you not troubled me." Boswell: "Sir, I beg you to believe . . ." Johnson: "Sir, you meant to trouble me, and I allowed myself to be troubled." Boswell: "On my way to you, Sir, I encoun-

tered Mr. Wells, who pressed me very obligingly to visit him at Easton Glebe, which, you know, is his country estate." Johnson: "I know nothing of Mr. Wells." Boswell: "I regret his principles, but he is a very agreeable man. I think him more zealous for knowledge than you allow." Johnson: "Then he hides his zeal in his writings." Boswell: "Have you not read his universal History, Sir?" Johnson: "I have not." Boswell: "It was first issued some years since, in fortnightly numbers, which were very liberally displayed by the booksellers. I wonder you saw them not." Johnson: "I saw them." Boswell: "But were you never tempted, Sir, to indulge your curiosity with the purchase of a number?" Johnson: "I was not, Sir." Boswell: "I purchased each number on its appearance." Johnson: "I believe you, Sir." Boswell: "There is a real appetite for knowledge in the book. I am satisfied, Sir, that had you looked into one number, you would not have been content to miss the others." Johnson: "Sir, I could never feel myself obliged to pay an ignorant man to conduct his education in public."

This was a sharp stroke; but I was determined to persevere on the behalf of Mr. Wells's, having long grieved in secret at my venerable friend's obstinate refusal to acknowledge any merit in an author, whose writings, strongly though I censured them in certain particulars, had often cheered and instructed my leisure hours. Boswell: "Will you not grant, Sir, that Mr. Wells has performed a useful service by his persevering encouragement of the science of aeronauticks?" This was an unlucky remark. Dr. Johnson was at no time a friend to flying, and the conjunction of this topick with the name of Mr. Wells now put him into visible displeasure. He began to roll violently about in his chair, which threw me into confusion, so that with my next remark I precipitated the discharge which I was endeavouring to avert. Boswell: "Might it not be permissible, Sir, to view Mr. Wells as an unconscious agent of Divine Providence, Whose intention it

may be that mankind shall so perfect itself in the science of aerial transport as to carry to the other planets of our system the blessings of true religion?" Johnson (puffing hard with passion): "Sir, you are indecent!" Boswell: "My dear Sir . . .!" Johnson: "To prescribe to Divine Providence! To . . ." Boswell: "Pray, Sir, pray!" Johnson: "To connect a barren and mischievous invention of presumptuous rascals . . ." Boswell: "I do assure you, Sir . . ." Johnson: "Hold, Sir! I *will* speak! What, visit me with the express intention to bait me with a person, who . . ." Here he became so violent, with such intemperate vehemence of abuse, beyond anything I had ever experienced in his company, though I had often enough been so unlucky as to attract his resentment, that I sate quite stunned; nor, I verily believe, had my head been the price of my silence, could I have summoned up resolution to interpose one word in extenuation of my conduct, which I was nevertheless conscious had been actuated by no improper motives. An awkward silence followed this tremendous discharge, and I was turning over in my mind how I could take my leave without an appearance of incivility, which I was most eager to avoid, when I perceived, lying on the table, the newly issued pamphlet on Oliver Cromwell by Mr. Hilaire Belloc. Knowing Johnson's detestation of the usurper, and how highly he valued Mr. Belloc, I seized this lucky chance, as I deemed it, of leading him back to a better humour. Boswell (pointing to the pamphlet): "Sir, this is a very excellent piece of writing." Johnson: "Sir, it is a very miserable piece of writing." Boswell: "Indeed, Sir? How so, Sir? I confess, Sir, that it seemed to me . . ." Johnson: "Sir, Belloc would have us despise for a fool a man whose parts were no less extraordinary than his wickedness." Boswell: "But, Sir, is that not Mr. Belloc's art?" Johnson: "I don't understand you, Sir." Boswell: "Why, Sir, with your extended experience of mankind, you must allow that men will sooner leave admiring a fool than a

villain." Johnson: "Sir, I need neither your words nor your example to instruct me that the vanity of men is stronger than their virtue, that they will rather be detested for venerating crime, than ridiculed for applauding folly. But Belloc, Sir, is a good man. I did not expect from Belloc that he would aim at the vanity of his readers, when it was his duty as a Christian to arouse their loathing of criminality." Boswell: "I think, Sir, that he is a little jealous for his favourite, Bonaparte, whose abilities he will not have lessened by a comparison with those of Cromwell. And, indeed, of the two, I suppose Bonaparte will generally be allowed to be the more remarkable." Johnson (angrily): "Sir, this is not your opinion. You say it to vex. Sir, I will not be made your butt!" Boswell: "Indeed, Sir . . ." Johnson: "Belloc has French blood. Belloc may be a fool about Bonaparte, if he chooses. (Very warmly) I know nothing more offensive than adopting another man's opinion, by way of raising a dispute, to gratify a desire of mischief!" Boswell: "My dear Sir, I had no such intention; I had not, indeed." Johnson: "What, a Corsican beggar, a rascal without either judgment or firmness, one who rose to power among a rabble of cutthroats, and maintained himself in power by enterprises each one more lunatick than the last, a wretch who, as soon as he had involved his followers in disaster, abandoned them to destruction, a pitiful scoundrel, who fled to his most detested opponent to beg a refuge from the vengeance of his own disgusted accomplices! And this, Sir, is the fellow you would exalt above Cromwell, a man who wanted nothing of greatness but virtue, a man who achieved everything which he attempted, and grasped nothing which he did not retain." Boswell: "But, Sir, are you not imitating Mr. Belloc in reproaching rather the folly than the wickedness of an opinion, in which you do not yourself join? But (rising) I perceive I have displeased you, Sir; I am unlucky to-day; I will take my leave." Johnson: "Sir, you are insolent. Sir, I have answered a fool

according to his folly. Had you wit enough to be wicked, my answer had been very different. Keep your seat, Sir!" (in a towering passion). Boswell: "Sir, I beg you to be calm!" Johnson: "I *am* calm, Sir. (With a sudden change of voice) Why will you provoke me so? It is very ill of you."

I was seized with compunction, and running to my venerable friend took his hand in both mine, renewing the expression of the extraordinary respect and affection which he inspired in me, and protesting my complete innocence of all intention to displease him. Johnson (mildly): "Poh! Sir. That is enough. Take your chair, Sir, and let us converse like rational beings." Boswell: "You are too good to me, Sir." Johnson (with a complacent smile): "Sir, I believe I am."

Literary Notes

I HAVE an apology to make. Last month I hazarded a suggestion as to the authorship of "Malice Aforethought," pseudonymously published as the work of "Francis Iles." Mr. Charles Williams, the poet, while acknowledging his identity with Mr. Charles Williams, author of "War in Heaven" and other admirable novels, denies any complicity in "Malice Aforethought." At this point I stop guessing. I actually *have* one more guess to make, based on the medical, rather than the stylistic, aspect of the book. But if that guess is right, all I can say is that the suspect's name should be Mr. Jekyll-Hyde, for he has never written anything like this before. Once bit, twice shy; I shall not go into any further details. But the thing is a mystery. We have Mr. Gollancz's assurance that the book is by "a famous novelist who prefers to remain . . . ." or words to that effect; and which of the "famous" novelists has the brains, psychological insight, veracity, and concision which make "Malice Aforethought" so notable?

* * *

¶ Remarkably little attention was given to the death of Frank Harris, at a ripe old age, on the Riviera. The man who could probably best commemorate him is Mr. Bernard Shaw, who served under him on the *Saturday Review*, and has dealt extensively with him in prefaces to plays.

* * *

¶ It was a curious career. When Mr. Harris first came upon the town—from Belfast, America, Cardiff, Jerusalem, nobody could tell which—he was an instant success. He edited the *Fortnightly*, he edited the *Saturday*; he married a rich woman and he entertained. Also he *was* entertained; Oscar Wilde said of him: "Frank Harris has dined out in every house in London—once!" He wrote short stories, especially "Montes the Matador,"

which were highly praised by many critics, particularly the late Arnold Bennett. He then came under a cloud. He promoted race-tracks; he edited a demi-mondaine kind of paper called *Modern Society*; the war found him in America. In England, as editor of the *Saturday Review*, he had been one of the first to warn people against the aggressive imperialism of the Kaiser, the Junkers, and the German Navy. In America he changed his tune, and became a furious anti-Briton with all the stock anti-British stories about Lord Grey and the encirclement of Germany. The end of the war came, and he retired to a villa on the Riviera. There did he write the longest book of his life, putting Oscar Wilde and Shakespeare (whom he made a sort of blend of himself and Oscar Wilde) behind him. He wrote the memoirs of his own life, under the title of "My Life and Loves." Few people in this country have seen the successive volumes of this work; the Customs see to that. There was an account of the general outline of his life (possibly true, possibly not); but the "loves" (and the inverted commas should be very emphatic) were much more conspicuous than the "life." The autobiography was chiefly concerned with the long sequence of Mr. Harris's "conquests"; and the telling of them was as unconvincing as it was vulgar, the incidents being patently inspired by Casanova, but the style being nothing near as good as Casanova's. Casanova was a wretch, but at least one can believe what he said. Mr. Harris's account of his victories in "love" is as unconvincing as his account of his conversations with Carlyle, whom he alleged to have confided in the young Harris, at an almost impossible date, things which were never confided to anybody else. Force of personality, in this instance, was misleading; both Arnold Bennett and Mr. Shaw were misled. That exuberant brigand, though he could impose on almost anybody when he was alive, could not get his personality "across" in print. His books, now he has gone, will be as dead as mutton—though, not having the great Oxford

Dictionary by me, I don't quite know why mutton should be supposed to be deader than anything else.

* * *

¶ I find that whenever I go amongst novel-readers the subject of discussion is "the long novel." My answer is always (1) that the libraries, other things being equal, prefer long novels; and (2) that, provided the novel is good, the longer it is the better. Almost all the standard classical novels by Fielding, Dickens, Thackeray, Hardy, Meredith, Balzac, Tolstoy, and such, are very much longer than the ordinary novel of the day. If an author is really a born novelist and can introduce us to an imaginary world of people, we like mixing with his world and are reluctant to part with it. The trouble is that the moment a man (like Mr. Priestley) writes a successful long novel, all the commercial authors and publishers think that they must publish long novels too, and all kinds of people concoct huge books who are tolerable at moderate length, but quite intolerable when they write on a large scale. This is what is happening now. It happens also in the theatre. You have a rush on "crook" plays because one has succeeded, or a rush on "spectacle" plays because one has succeeded. What neither publishers nor play-producers will see is that the good thing, of whatever kind or length, granted a chance, will "get through"; they will insist on looking for a vogue in kind or length; the result is failure after failure.

* * *

¶ I recommend this month three biographies: Mr. Clennell Wilkinson's "Nelson," Mr. Guedalla's "The Duke," and Mr. Arthur Bryant's "Charles II." The last is especially noteworthy. Charles II, the one man of genius who ever sat upon an English throne, has been grossly ill-treated by Whig historians, simply because he was too indolent and good-natured to resist a woman who was attracted by him; but he has at last had justice done to him.

PETER PIPER.

Reviews of Books

AN OUTLINE OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE. Edited by DR. WILLIAM ROSE. (Gollancz. 8s. 6d.)

ARISTOTLE must have smiled when he wrote: "All men desire knowledge." For we cannot suppose him unaware that, if true, the statement raises a pretty problem concerning the nature of desire. Can men desire that of the nature of which they are ignorant? Certainly, if Aristotle is right, they can and do. It has been stated that within a week of publication, booksellers had acquired 30,000 copies of this book and that another 20,000 were being printed. Yet the title speaks for the contents. There is no knowledge in books. As the tutor said to the young prince, "I cannot learn your lesson for you." Knowing is a subjective act. Accordingly, books can only be wrongly labelled "Knowledge." Also you cannot have knowledge in outline. Hence, if 50,000 persons are buying this book in order to satisfy their desire for knowledge, they must be ignorant of what knowledge is.

Further, if any of those who buy it, not only read it, but also apprehend the whole of its contents and then have their desire for knowledge satisfied, another problem will arise. What has actually happened when the donkey's desire for a carrot is satisfied with a cardboard carrot? The book has been described as "The New Aristotle." This is to describe black as white. Aristotle, as the most hasty glance at his writings must reveal, dealt with fundamentals. This book is altogether superficial. You cannot get at the fundamentals with which, as philosophy always has been, contemporary philosophy is confronted, by reading brief and—by reason of their brevity—inaccurate accounts of the views of forty recent or contemporary philosophers. Yet such is Mr. A. Wolf's contribution, which he entitles "Recent and Contemporary Philosophy." Mr. James Rice, again, is admirably lucid in his exposition of the more simple mathematical symbolism, but that by itself is of no use to anybody, and when his chance comes to advert to fundamentals, in his treatment of non-Euclidean geometries, he lets it pass. A test here, I suggest, is whether or not a writer mentions that non-Euclidean spaces can be neither imagined nor perceived. On the point Mr. Rice is silent. Finally, to limit the examples to three, what is gained by being told, as one is by Mr. C. H. Reilly, that the late Edwin Rickards was the only modern English master of the Baroque—and no more? Mr. Reilly's article is packed with facts and problems to the study of which many men have devoted their lifetime without mastering them, so that it reminds one of nothing so much as of a too fat lady in a too tight dress. Obviously, it can slake no thirst for real knowledge.

It may be asked too why the book is entitled "*Modern* Knowledge," when so many of the articles are largely devoted

to historical surveys of their subjects, or conversely. In respect of "modernity" also, another criticism has to be made. The book contains nothing about engineering. Commerce gets but incidental notice, in the article on "Finance." There is nothing about law, beyond a tiny section on primitive law. The treatment of morals is limited to a short section on axiology and an article on "The Beginnings of Morals and Culture"—and about these alleged beginnings, by the way, nobody but the Westermarcks, the Lévy-Bruhls, and the Malinowskis can be really interested. Religion gets in only through an "Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion." Yet these are all "modern" subjects.

Even, however, if the editor and the contributors had done their work better than they have, there would still be an objection to such a book as this. When you are familiar with any specialized subject, you cannot avoid having opinions about it, and, if you write, what you write is not impartial. The specialists who parade here are no exception. Mr. Dobb and Mr. Cole, who deal respectively with economics and political organization, are, for instance, not an economist and a political theorist pure and simple: they are Socialists. Sir Arthur Thomson is not merely a biologist: he is a "methodological vitalist."

I fear there is no help for it: those who truly want knowledge will still have to pursue it in the good old way.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

AMERICA THE MENACE. By GEORGES DUHAMEL. (George Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

IT is becoming the fashion for European writers who are abashed by the spectacle of modern life to vent their rage and their disgust, not on modern life, but on the United States. This is a pity, for it deprives such writings of much of their vitality and point. If the vulgarity, the standardization, and the intellectual flabbiness of our age are pictured as purely American phenomena, the European is absolved from making an active effort to combat these sins. But if they are shown as outstanding traits of the Western world in the twentieth century, then the attack on them becomes a worthy effort in the war for civilization.

M. Duhamel, unfortunately, suggests throughout his book that the horrors he has discovered in North America are peculiar to that continent, and by so doing he diminishes the worth of his own eloquence and indignation. For example, he asks what it is that America has given to the immigrants, to compensate them for leaving home and going to a new land. And he answers: "It has given them new needs and new desires. The whole philosophy of this industrial dictatorship leads to this unrighteous

scheme: to impose appetites and needs on man. Most of these immigrants came from a simple land where the son could wear his father's cloak all his life long. America has given them the shirt that will not survive two launderings, the shoe that you throw away the minute a hole appears in it, because it is not worth cobbling—which, moreover, no one knows nowadays how to do—and the ready-made overcoat that is worn out in a winter and has to be replaced." Surely the true effectiveness and interest of this passage comes from the fact that it is a parable on modern life, and not merely a description of transatlantic iniquity?

And again, in a chapter where he is attacking the degradation of music in the cinema (where themes and fragments from the world's great compositions are strung together to make a treacly accompaniment for a sentimental picture), M. Duhamel writes: "Yes, somewhere out there in the center of the country there was a great building of black brick where they slaughtered music. Its throat was cut by negroes as the throats of hogs were cut in the Middle West. It was felled by tired brutes who were half asleep. It was dismembered, it was salted, it was peppered, it was cooked . . . And no one cried murder! For great men *were* being murdered . . . All those thoughts which stood for the flesh and blood of our masters were dismembered, hacked to pieces, and mutilated. They passed by us now like shameful flotsam and jetsam on this wave of warm melted lard. And there was no one to cry murder!" This is eloquent and true. But is it only in America that the high things in life are being degraded, made easy, made soft and emotional and "popular"?

It would have been more honest, and more useful, for M. Duhamel to have called his book *Modernity the Menace.*

HERBERT AGAR.

MEMOIRS OF LORD HERVEY. Edited by ROMNEY SEDGWICK. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, King's Printers' Edition. 3 vols. £5 5s. od.)

IT is possible to find Lord Hervey odious, but no one can fail to delight in his Memoirs; they read like a novel, of which the sub-title might well be, "Or the Family Life of George II," so much are they of interest, not only to the student of the period, but to anyone eager in the hopeless pursuit of trying to find out what human beings are like. For Hervey came to such a degree of intimacy with Queen Caroline, that there was nothing under the sun they could not canvas together, from the merits of bishops to the amours of the King, or the procreative possibilities of Frederick, Prince of Wales. It is astonishing what a fervour of hatred (shared by Hervey) the royal parents bestowed upon their elder son; they, and at least one daughter, prayed daily for his death. But, as Mr. Sedgwick points out in his admirable Introduction,

in those days it was almost impossible for the King not to quarrel with his heir-apparent. In England, the King could do nothing against his heir, owing to public opinion; and since the Prince was a nonentity while he remained on terms with his father, and became a person of the first political importance so soon as he quarrelled with him, the temptation of a break was too strong to be resisted. "In reality, Frederick's relations with his parents only appear to be unusual because they have been adequately reported." Adequately reported, indeed; we may say minutely, and the comparison of Hervey with Boswell is not unhappy. The touches, the gestures, the frowns, the winks, which accompany the almost verbatim reports of conversations, make whole scenes as alive as anything Boswell ever wrote. Nor, in spite of Hervey's modest disclaimer, does the work by any means lack style; Hervey had a power of vivid description, a command of language and phrase, which enabled him to draw incidents and characters to the life, at least to life as he saw it, which was not generously. There are only two people for whom he has any good to say; the first, that remarkable woman, Queen Caroline; the second Walpole—and the latter had at least one clay foot.

It has been observed that Hervey and Horace Walpole, jointly, are "almost wholly responsible for posterity's impressions of the eighteenth century." This is bad luck on Sir Robert Walpole's enemies, for it is on account of these two writers that posterity has thought worse of them than they deserve. Hervey is not a distinterested witness. Mr. Sedgwick is of opinion that the derogatory statements are too malicious not to be true; this is to be too innocent, or too sceptical of mankind's powers of invention. It is not possible that Lord Harrington can have been so lazy an ass; and we know that Lord Chesterfield was not such an unprincipled cur and fatuous courtier as Hervey makes out. But Hervey disliked the Stanhopes; that is enough. That he did not know them very well is shown by the fact that he supposed that Chesterfield liked his kinsman. But as far as more public affairs go, Hervey is of immense use in recording the various opinions of his time, although he does not devote an extravagant amount of space to them. They were not his main interest; what he panted after was material for significant gossip; his joy was the dissection of courtiers; and if, as he remarked, the operation involved dirt and produced stench, those that wished to see the courtiers' minds dissected must bear with these disagreeables. It may be doubted, however, whether they were disagreeables to him; if they had been, his volumes would not be so fascinating.

This edition is especially welcome for several reasons. For one thing, the older one was becoming difficult to procure, and, moreover, needed re-editing. And not only has Mr. Sedgwick

now reproduced the Memoirs textually, "without regard to considerations either of decency or dullness" (the indecency is not outrageous, the few dull passages, if found so, can be skipped), but, by being privileged to make use of the Royal Archives at Windsor, he has been able to restore, not only the minor mutilations which deprive the MS. which Croker had at his disposal of much of the interest of the Memoirs, but also a hundred odd missing pages. Thus a considerable amount of most entertaining and illuminating novelistic matter is restored. Unfortunately, there is still a large gap, probably lost for ever, covering the years 1730–1732, which no doubt describe Hervey's relations with Frederick, and equally doubtless cover such incidents as his duel with Pulteney. Mr. Sedgwick, however, provides a good deal of information to fill the chasm, and suggests why this portion should be absent from both copies. He has also had access to papers in the possession of the Marquess of Bristol and the Earl of Ilchester, of which he makes good use in his succinct and revealing Introduction. Finally, the Memoirs are beautifully produced, in print, spacing and binding, and adorned with plates of the first quality; the whole thing is a pleasure to handle. We could have wished that Mr. Sedgwick had been more liberal with notes; but that is largely a matter of taste, and much information is given in the workmanlike index.

BONAMY DOBRÉE.

EARLY MAN, HIS ORIGIN, DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE. By G. ELLIOT SMITH, M.D., F.R.S., and others. (Benn. 8s. 6d.)

IN an article on Faraday which appeared recently in one of the Sunday papers, the writer advocated a more liberal encouragement, in the financial sense, of scientific research on the ground of the benefits accruing to our industries from the results of investigations in the laboratory which have been undertaken from no motive of financial gain, and, more often than not, without any thought of their practical application. This is a plea frequently advanced by men of science, but without recognition of the fact that to the average layman, with whom, in the last resort, rests the power of the purse, current progress in science is a closed book. The layman is, as a rule, quite unaware of the trend of scientific discovery, still less of the possibilities it holds out of influencing profoundly his everyday life. For this the scientific investigator is himself largely to blame. Each science speaks a highly technical language peculiar to itself, and each has a background of its own. Failing periodical surveys of progress and expositions of the results which may be expected to follow, especially in their practical bearing, scientific research is unlikely to arouse the interest among the general public which is its due.

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'How brilliantly Mr. Guedalla writes. This is indeed a remarkable book.'

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

It is from this point of view, quite apart from the intrinsic interest of its subject-matter, that this volume, modest as it is in appearance, deserves more than passing mention. It presents six lectures on Early Man which were delivered under the auspices of the Royal Anthropological Institute with the object of arousing public interest in the subject. Each of the six lecturers takes some aspect of the problem of early man, and rapidly surveys the present state of our knowledge on that question, inferentially suggesting the line of future research.

In the introductory lecture Professor Elliot Smith, for example, in dealing with the evolution of man, points out how each fresh discovery say, of a new type of man such as Piltdown Man, the Rhodesian skull or Peking Man, adds precision to the conception of what we may expect to find in the ultimate ancestral type, and how the study of the evolution of racial types is gradually narrowing down the area in which we may hope to find the place of racial origins; while his exposition of the bearing of such a highly specialized study as that of the brain on the evolution of man's distinctive faculties and activities, will be a revelation to those who lack the technical knowledge necessary to appreciate the results of comparative morphology. Sir Arthur Keith, on the other hand, adds to the interest of his lecture on "The Evolution of Races, Past and Present" by the stress he lays on the practical bearing of the evolutionary study of race; for, as he has stated more emphatically since this lecture was delivered, he regards racial antagonism and national aspirations as the instrument of progress in the evolutionary process.

We must pass over Professor Parsons on the anthropological history of the Englishman with his interesting suggestion as to the lines of development now in progress in the modern population, Mr. Miles Burkitt's "art-groups" in "Most Primitive Art," and Mr. Harold Peake on the beginnings of agriculture and the bearing of its origin on the question of the priority of culture in Mesopotamia and Egypt respectively, to invite attention to Professor J. L. Myres' fascinating study of the origin and early use of metals. The late Sir Richard Temple used to say—and he spoke from a wide experience—that to understand the currency of a people is to master their psychology. Professor Myres shows how in exploring a cognate problem, which may appear to be of a highly technical character, we are led inevitably and necessarily to the consideration of the religious beliefs of the individual, the social organization of the group, and the relations and communications of groups and peoples *inter se*.

E. N. FALLAIZE.

NEW NOVELS.

THE WAVES. By VIRGINIA WOOLF. (The Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.)
WHICH WAY? By THEODORA BENSON. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)
RETURN I DARE NOT. By MARGARET KENNEDY. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)
EAST WIND, WEST WIND. By PEARL BUCK. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)
SADO. By WILLIAM PLOMER. (The Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.)
THE SONS OF MRS. AAB. By SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN. (Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.)
THUNDER BELOW. By THOMAS ROURKE. (Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.)

IN "The Waves," Miss Virginia Woolf has advanced farther along her particular line than ever before. She has always been impatient of the ordinary devices of novelists, she has now discarded them altogether. Six characters, Jinny, Susan, Rhoda, Bernard, Neville and Louis soliloquize against a background of waves. They are six facets of Miss Woolf's mind. They cannot be otherwise understood or they become ridiculous. It is wrong to say they represent the current of unconscious thought of six different people. No one ever thinks to themselves so consciously, nor six people so similarly. So far from being extreme naturalism, Miss Woolf's convention is extreme artificiality. Her admirers are constant. They are not distracted when her opening chapter begins:

> "I see a ring," said Bernard, "hanging above me. It quivers and hangs in a loop of light."
>
> "I see a slab of pale yellow," said Susan, "spreading away until it meets a purple stripe."
>
> "I hear a sound," said Rhoda, "cheep, chirp; cheep, chirp; going up and down."
>
> "I see a globe," said Neville, "hanging down in a drop against the enormous flanks of some hill."
>
> "I see a crimson tassel," said Jinny, "twisted with gold threads."

But those who are not idolators may well be exasperated by such opening chords. On later pages Miss Woolf works them into a suite harmony. The changing rhythms, the dying cadences of her prose; the sad reiterations and questings of her mind conspire to soothe like chamber music. But even during the moments of enchantment there is a feeling that both prose and mind have remained shut up too long in a private room, have not been abroad in the streets, and in the midst of striving and effort about the world have only been conscious of a clock ticking or a cat by the fire.

Both Miss Kennedy's and Miss Benson's books are light affairs. In "Which Way?" Claudia, with money to spend and friends in the same fortunate situation, has three invitations for the same week-end. Miss Benson lets us know what would happen to her if she accepted one, two or three. In one she falls for Guy Verney, a business man (it is difficult to understand

her taste). In two for Hugh, an author (a nice boy). In three for Lionel Byng, a polo player (a magnificent and delightful bear). Certain scenes recur in all three. Claudia is upset at the death of an old flower seller and we are shown in its due place how Guy, Hugh and Lionel react to her tears. Again, there is a political discussion with each at the breakfast table. That between Claudia and Lionel Byng is a sheer joy. Indeed, it is on account of the last section dealing with Lionel Byng that the book deserves mention. There Miss Benson is witty and kind at once. She can both love and laugh at her characters.

"Return I Dare Not" has various interweaving themes, among which the chief are the rescue of Hugo Pott's personality and the relations of Laura and Ford. Hugo Pott is a young and successful playwright, genial by nature, but forced by publicity to live up to the label of unaffected geniality in and out of season. He is invited to Syranwood to entertain the incredible Lady Aggie, who apparently can make or damn a play. Also invited to Syranwood are Ford, a scientist, Sir Adrian Upward, a literary critic, Philomena and her publisher husband, and a social jackal, Corny. At Syranwood are Lady Geraldine (the elderly hostess), her daughter Laura, and her grand-daughter Marianne. Solange, Sir Adrian Upward's daughter, has been invited by Marianne unbeknown to her father. Philomena believes herself to be in love with Hugo. Her determination to be fair to her husband and its consequences are a comment on present convention and an oblique commendation of Edwardian convention in such matters. Laura and Ford, by a strange whim of Laura's, had met years before. The week-end witnesses their failure to achieve the relationship they had once had, but gives Solange, desperately keen on medical research, the chance she had wished to make contact with the scientist. Hugo Pott, by a misplaced yawn in the presence of Lady Aggie, threatens his perilously poised reputation as the amusing and unspoilt box-office success. Awkwardly involved with Philomena and fretted by the demands being made on his resources he turns to Marianne, who, unknown to him, loves him. He follows her at night on to the downs and wins his peace.

The end is a natural one for Miss Kennedy. Her sympathies are always for the young and nubile girls. Solange has her Ford and Marianne her Hugo, and the women who have had, in Miss Kennedy's eyes, the folly to pass from girlhood are left only with bitterness and regret. Miss Kennedy is a deft and accomplished novelist. Her cool comments, her clear prose and her ingenious plot blind the reader to the essential artificiality of her work. Her characters are all tilted over into caricatures. Hugo takes twenty minutes to get from his restaurant table to the door. The caprices of Lady Aggie can outbalance the critics and the

people. Marianne is Tessa over again—wise, courageous, clear-sighted and loving. Instead of the woman of thirty we now have held up for our idol the maiden of seventeen. I pay my tribute to Miss Kennedy for amusing and entertaining me—I have a penchant for somewhat caricatured characters—but her theory that young girls, who certainly attract by their youth and grace, have a wisdom and clarity of vision denied to maturer women is a theory too contrary to common experience to be tenable.

Miss Buck has an intimate knowledge of Chinese life. That was revealed by "The Good Earth." In "East Wind, West Wind" a Chinese lady of high birth writes to her English friend. Her letters are pre-occupied with two problems. Her first is her own difficulty in breaking with her training by her mother as a traditional Chinese lady when she marries a Chinaman with Western ideas; the second the troubles between her brother and his parents when he refuses to marry the girl to whom they betrothed him in infancy and returns from America with an American wife. There are interesting sidelights on Chinese customs, but Miss Buck's style and attitude have depreciated since "The Good Earth." Then she was detached and sincere. Now she often indulges in pseudo-Chinese floweriness and sentimentality.

Mr. Plomer can certainly not be accused of the last fault.

KENNERLEY

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He may not be so instructed in Japanese life as Miss Buck in Chinese, but he has an intellectual integrity which is as refreshing as it is rare. Lucas, a young English artist, visits Japan. He has letters of introduction to Iris, an Englishwoman who has married a Japanese, and who lends him a bungalow in their garden. Sado is the name of the young Japanese graduate in whom he becomes interested. The novel deals with the effect that Lucas, at once sensitive to physical objects and through self-interest insensitive to feelings, has on Iris, her husband and Sado. There is very little warmth in it and much analysis. It gives the impression of being the note-book of an entirely cold, impersonal observer. The style is distinctive, and the descriptions of Japanese scenes are as exquisite, as economical and as satisfying as their own paintings.

From Japan to South Africa. Sheba is a township of diggers: a collection of corrugated iron buildings neighbouring the mud hives of the Kaffir boys. Among the diggers is Gideon Aab, dogged by ill-luck and convinced that such ill-luck is due to the existence of his idiot brother. Told by a doctor that his brother cannot live long he fraudulently insures his life. The results of his action on the doctor, Gideon's mother, Gideon himself and the teacher Fanny are traced to their grim and logical conclusion. There is a subsidiary theme in Fanny's love for the wastrel George Redmarsh. But that is but a trimming on the central tragedy. In my review of "Hatter's Castle" I referred to Balzac's treatment of the effects on society and himself of an individual's obsession. Mrs. Millin is a colonial Balzac *in petto*. Her scene is cramped, her characters do not all come to life and her initial chapters weigh on the reader; but she redeems these faults by sudden flashes of insight into human motives, and above all by her realization of how inexorably Nemesis rewards the culprit who infringes the laws of the community.

The setting of "Thunder Below" is Venezuela. In the town of San Mateo work half a dozen mining engineers for an oil company. The only white woman is Susan, the wife of the blind manager. All around live the gay, feckless Burros of the country. The consequences of such a situation are the subject of the novel. This brief description may not entice the reader, but I would say this: that of all the novels I have read this autumn—and they are not a few—I have liked none so much, I have found none which seemed so little like fiction and so much like life. The accents are the accents of truth; the characters are as actual as one's friends. There is nothing sentimental or artificial. The novel has the directness and reality of a narrative by an eighteenth century seaman or explorer. There is one fault. As in all American novels the characters drink too much. One

is compelled to the conclusion that Americans do not drink like gentlemen to please the palate, but to deaden the senses and reduce the intellect. R. McNAIR SCOTT.

MUSIC AT NIGHT AND OTHER ESSAYS. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d.)

MR. HUXLEY, as an essayist, treats life seriously. He would never be found declaring whimsically with Montaigne, "*Je suis moy mesme la matière de mon livre: ce n'est pas raison que tu employes ton loisir en un subject si frivole et si vain.*" This particular brand of veiled conceit and charming egotism fights in vain against Mr. Huxley's one personal confession in this volume: the confession that he hates the "personal touch." Nor would the word "charm" appear appropriate, since it depends on qualities other than the intellect, and, when linked with essays, carries with it the appalling suggestion of a bed-book. Yet "Music at Night" is no misleading title for the meditations of a present-day moralist. It is even something of a bed-time book. Not for its comforting avowal that beauty depends on soul before cosmetics; nor because the essay "Our Grace" might be read inattentively as a Christian tract. But rather because Mr. Huxley, bravely arguing, but with less than his usual show of mental agility, displays signs of weariness in a twilit world.

It would be odd if the essayist who distils abstractions could be jovial. For there is little life apart from personality, and the foibles that look gay when pinned to characters become merely depressing as generalities. Mr. Huxley is concerned here with selected snobberies, contemporary ethics as exhibited by censorships, the decline in effective action due to weakening of belief, the dullness of sexual relationships now that artificial obstacles are removed, and the artist's terror of the obvious (and passionate) because it has been cheapened by bad work. It is not his aim to lash these evils with an ardent or satirical whip. He is content to demonstrate and shrug his shoulders, to a lullaby refrain that says effectually, "A poor thing, but your own." In any case it is a world of incompatibles and unbridgeables, in which art is untranslatable, science and poetry can only meet for irony, and the moon can be a stone and yet a god. But we can always listen to music, though it is mechanically set going and jars us finally with the scratching of a needle. The music may be Mr. Huxley's prose, or his thought processes. He is always readable, even when he seems to be re-stating obvious and familiar truths. The fact is, a writer like Mr. Huxley is apt to become his own worst enemy, for his point of view has been so far adopted that he is looked to now for an advancement on it.

The privilege of an essayist, however, is not to teach but to be personal. So we come back to find "*je suis moy mesme la matière de mon livre*" applying to Mr. Huxley after all. His abstract arguments have a pseudo-objectivity that comes home to roost on the dissecting intellectual. He is intellectual even when specifically praising Lawrence and pleading for the recognition of man's bodily instincts by his conscious mind. He weaves the same shrewd patterns of contradiction, counterpoint and comparison as in his novels; human beings, in the subdued mood of these night-pieces, being likened to no uglier animals than Siamese cats. The most felicitous essay is on El Greco, as a painter whose figures seem closed up in a visceral landscape like Jonahs in a whale. Mr. Huxley's own pictures are all convolutions. To describe them, for El Greco's visceral organs we must substitute a brain. SYLVA NORMAN.

SEVEN SHORT STORIES. By WALTER DE LA MARE. Illustrated by JOHN NASH. (Faber and Faber. 15s.)

IT would be severe to call this "a publisher's volume." A poet will not select commercially, nor does this publisher need, one hopes, to contemplate even such crimes. Any who does not own "The Connoisseur," "Broomsticks" or "The Riddle," will welcome this new faggot from these three collections. The book needs hypercriticism only. It proves Mr. de la Mare's contention that "atmosphere" is the effect produced by a hair-sifted vocabulary, is a mood evoked by minute touch added to minute touch, so that the residuary impression (often, as in "Miss Duveen," part pity part horror) is the sum of an imperceptibly growing weight of gentle flakes, flakes that fall until the reader's mind is white and heavy under the snow-storm of pity or of fear.

The poet is understood to demur to the prevailing opinion that the debatable borderland of fact and of malign fancy is his peculiar ground, but he does give excuse for such opinion. Yet "Stories from the Bible" overbrimmed with white magic, and one could still wish that he would balance his tales of trepidation with tales of exquisite pleasures. We do need him to cultivate Euphrosyne; not to limit himself, but to follow Milton by writing his own "L'Allegro," too. Why should Thomas Traherne have almost the monopoly of joy in prose, why Herrick almost the same monopoly in poetry? Poe, Coleridge, even, are temptations too easy for Walter de la Mare. That, minute criticism apart, is his cardinal foreshortening at present. Hypercriticism, in its turn, may ask why the poet is content with "got to know" (instead of "came"), why he uses the words "quite" and "edifice" and "actually"—the two last of which are generally "quite" unnecessary if not "actually" intruders. Mr. de la

Mare is the eavesdropper of the Muses, and can overhear not only the horns of elfland but the most subtile of homely sounds by hearth and field. So few can overhear them, fewer still can make the "adder-deafness" of us others to overhear, that Mr. de la Mare is really neglecting the rarest of his opportunities, the most exquisite of his exquisite gifts. The best thanks that THE ENGLISH REVIEW can make for this volume is to suggest another: to be called, provisionally, "White Magic," or, say, "The Good Genius"; and the temptation to the poet must be that tales of white magic are much harder to write with comparable effect: harder at any rate, to anyone less gifted than he. Mr. Nash's illustrations to a book printed in black ink on white paper would have suited it better if they had been in black and white too.

OSBERT BURDETT.

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THE SCOTTISH SOCIALISTS. ANONYMOUS. (Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.)

BIOGRAPHY

EDMUND BURKE : A BIOGRAPHY. REV. R. H. MURRAY. (Oxford University Press. 15s.)
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